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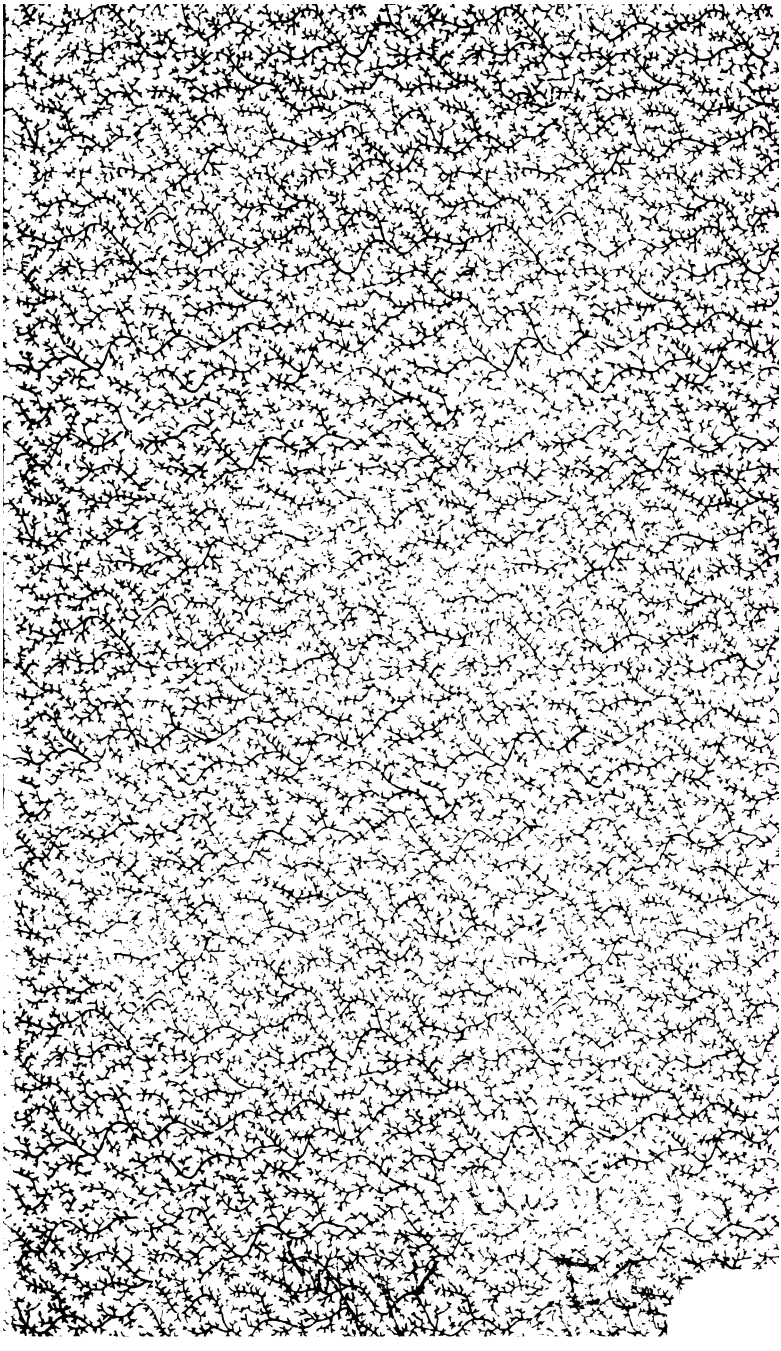

Imitation de Barbier, dic-
tionnaire des ouvrages anonymes
tome III, p. 58.

# MANUSCRIPT

TRANSMITTED

# FROM ST. HELENA,

BY

AN UNKNOWN CHANNEL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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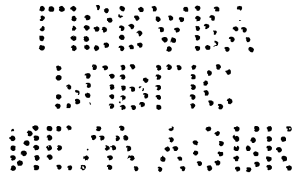

# PREFACE.

*I write not commentaries; for the events of my reign are sufficiently known, and I am not obliged to cater for public curiosity. I give to the world a sketch of these events, because my character and my intentions may be grossly misrepresented, and I wish to appear such as I really have been, in the eyes of my son, and of posterity.*

*Such is the object of this work. I am compelled to employ indirect means in order to cause it to be published. For if it should fall into the hands of the English ministers, I know, by experience, that it would never see the light.*

# MANUSCRIPT, &c.

My life has been so wonderful, that the admirers of my greatness have imagined that even my infancy must have been extraordinary. They were mistaken. The first years of my life were marked by no uncommon circumstances. I was an obstinate and inquisitive child. My early education was as wretched as every thing else in Corsica. I acquired the French language with facility from the officers of the garrison, with whom I spent my time.

I succeeded in whatever I undertook, because I willed it: my resolution was

strong, and my character decided. I never hesitated; which has given me an advantage over the rest of mankind. Besides, the will depends upon the constitution of the individual; every one is not master of his own determinations.

My intellectual character made me hate illusions. I have always discerned the truth at a single glance. This is the reason why I have always penetrated the bottom of things with more facility than others. The world has ever been seen by me such as it is, not such as it ought to be. So also I have not resembled any one. I have been by nature an isolated being.

I have never perceived that I derived any advantage from general studies, and, in truth, they have never served me any other purpose than to inspire a habit of or-

der and method. From the mathematics alone have I gathered any fruit. The rest has been lost labour; but self-love excited me to study.

My intellectual faculties developed themselves, without any exertion on my part. They seemed to consist only in the extraordinary flexibility of the fibres of my brain. I thought with more rapidity than others; so that I have always found time for reflection: in this consists my depth of thought.

My mind was too active to be amused with the ordinary diversions of youth. I was not wholly a stranger to them; but sought elsewhere something to interest me. This disposition placed me in a kind of solitude, where I had no other companion than my own thoughts. This mode of exist-

ence has been habitual in all periods of my life.

I took pleasure in the resolution of problems, and first sought for them in mathematics; but I soon exhausted this source of instruction, because the system of the material world is extremely limited. I then examined the moral system; and this labour proved more successful. It is to this species of research, which has become a confirmed habit, that I am indebted for my achievements in politics and in war.

My birth destined me to the service; and for this reason I was placed in the military school. I obtained a lieutenancy at the commencement of the revolution. I have never received any title with equal pleasure. The utmost bounds of my ambition were at that period limited to the

hope of wearing epaulettes on both shoulders: a colonel of artillery appeared to me the *ne plus ultra* of human greatness.

I was at that time too young to take any interest in politics. I had not yet judged of mankind in mass. I was therefore neither surprised nor alarmed at the confusion which reigned at that epoch, because I was unable to compare it with any other. I accommodated myself to the existing state of things. I had not yet become difficult.

I was employed in the army of the Alps. This army did nothing which an army ought to do. It was a stranger to discipline and the art of war. I was in a bad school. It is true, that we had no enemies to combat; we were only ordered to prevent the Piedmontese from passing the Alps, and nothing was more easy.

to continue his fire, whilst I went with a dozen men to cut off the retreat of the Piedmontese.

It appeared to me easy to gain a height which commanded their position, passing by a cluster of trees, on which our left rested. Our captain grew warm; his men gained ground; they drove the enemy towards us, and when he was broken, I unmasked my force. Our fire disturbed his retreat; we killed several, and took twenty prisoners. The remainder escaped.

I have related my first feat of arms, not because it gained me the rank of captain, but because it initiated me in the secret of the art of war. I perceived that it is easier to beat an enemy than is generally supposed; and that the great art consists in avoiding delay and irresolution, and in hazard-

ing only decisive movements, because it is by these means that the enemy is cut off.

I had gained my spurs; I thought I had gained experience. I now felt a strong attachment to a profession in which I succeeded so well. I thought of nothing else, and I set about solving all the problems which a field of battle could offer. I also wished to study the art of war in books, but I had none. I endeavoured to recollect the little I had read in history, and I compared its narrations with the scene which I had before my eyes. I thus formed to myself a theory of war, which time has fully developed, but has never falsified.

Such was the insignificant life I led until the siege of Toulon. I was then chief of battalion, and in that capacity I had it

in my power to contribute to the success of the siege.

Never was army so ill conducted as ours. No one knew who commanded. The generals dared not, for fear of the representatives of the people; who were also still more afraid of the committee of public safety. The commissaries plundered, the officers drank, the soldiers died of hunger; but they were regardless of danger and of death. Even this confusion inspired them with more courage than discipline could give. I then became convinced that mechanical armies are worthless; they have proved that my conviction was well grounded.

Every thing was transacted in the camp by motions and by acclamations. To me this was intolerable; but I could not pre-

vent it, and I moved steadily on to my object without embarrassment.

I was perhaps the only individual in the army who had a definite object, but it was my humour to have an end in every thing. I occupied myself in examining the position of the enemy and our own. I compared his moral resources with ours. I perceived that these resources were exclusively in our favour. His expedition was a rash attempt, of which he must have foreseen the catastrophe; and an enemy is never so weak as when he anticipates his own defeat.

I sought for the best point of attack; and determined the positions which our batteries should occupy. *Experienced* officers found them too dangerous, but battles are not gained by *experience*. I con-

tinued firm; I developed my plan to *Barras:* he had been a naval officer: These brave men understand nothing of the military art, but their characteristic is intrepidity. Barras approved it, because he wished to finish the siege. Besides, the convention did not require from him an account of mutilated limbs; all that they required was victory.

My artillerists were brave, and without experience: the best of all possible dispositions for soldiers. Our attacks were successful; the enemy was intimidated; he no longer dared to attempt any thing against us. He stupidly showered upon us his balls, which fell wherever chance directed, but produced no effect. The fire directed by me was better aimed. Beside the desire of victory, for its own sake, I was inspired with an ardent zeal in this

affair, because from it I expected promotion. I passed my time at the batteries; I slept in the trenches. Nothing is well done that is confided to others. The prisoners informed us that every thing was going to destruction in the place. It was at last evacuated in the most shameful manner.

We had deserved well of the country. I was created general of brigade. I was employed, denounced, dismissed, and ballotted for, by intrigues and factions. I imbibed a strong abhorrence to this anarchy, then at its height; which antipathy I have never since overcome. This bloody government was to me the more dreadful, as it was absurd, and self-destructive. It was a perpetual revolution, the very leaders of which sought not even the stability of their own power.

A general, but without employment, I went to Paris, because it was there only that it could be obtained. I attached myself to Barras, because I knew no one else. Roberspierre was dead; Barras played a distinguished part; it was necessary that I should attach myself to some person and party.

The insurrection of the sections against the convention was preparing: I took no great interest in its result, because I occupied myself less with politics than with war. I had not thought of playing a part in this crisis; but Barras proposed that I should command under him the armed force against the insurgents. I preferred, in my character of general, to be at the head of the troops, rather than throw myself into the ranks of the sections, where I had no business.

We only had a handful of men and two pieces of cannon to guard the hall of the *manege*. A column of insurgents came to attack us. I commenced a fire from my guns, and they fled; I caused them to be pursued; they threw themselves upon the steps of the church of St. Roque. Only one piece of cannon could pass the street, which was very narrow. The fire was directed against this mob, who dispersed, leaving several dead on the ground. The whole was finished in ten minutes.

This event, so trifling in itself, was attended with important consequences: It prevented the revolution from retrograding. I naturally attached myself to the party for which I had fought, and I found myself connected with the cause of the revolution. I began to study this great event, and the result was a conviction that

it would triumph, because it had for its allies public opinion, numbers, and audacity.

The affair of the sections raised me to the rank of general of division, and to a certain sort of celebrity. As the victorious party still trembled for its safety, I was detained at Paris contrary to my own wishes; for I had no other ambition than to enter into active service with my new rank.

I therefore remained in the capital without employment. I had no connexion with its inhabitants; no relation with its society, and I frequented only the house of Barras: there I was well received. It was there that I saw, for the first time, my wife, who subsequently had an important influence over the events of my life, and whose memory will be always dear to me.

I was not insensible to the charms of women; but I had not yet been seriously affected by them; and my character rendered me timid in their society. *Madame de Beauharnais* was the first who inspired me with courage. One day as I was sitting by her, she addressed to me some flattering compliments upon my military talents. This eulogy intoxicated me; I continually conversed with her; I followed her every where; I was passionately in love with her, and our friends discovered my secret long before I dared to reveal it to her.

My passion becoming known to Barras, he spoke to me on the subject. I had no reason to deny my sentiments. "That being the case," said he, "you must marry Madame de Beauharnais. You have a rank and talents worthy of estimation;

attack Austria in the quarter where she felt herself most secure; that is, in Italy.

The Directory had made peace with Prussia and Spain; but Austria, subsidized by England, strengthened her military resources, and made head against us upon the Rhine. It was evident that we ought to make a diversion in Italy—to shake the power of Austria—to give a lesson to the petty princes of Italy, who had leagued against us; and, finally, to give a decided colour to the war, which it had hitherto wanted.

This plan was so simple; it comported so well with the interests of the Directory, who needed success to establish their popularity, that I hastened to communicate it, for fear of being anticipated by others. It encountered no opposition, and I was

appointed commander in chief of the army of Italy.

I set off to join this army, which had received some reinforcements from the army of Spain, and I found it fifty thousand strong, but without any resources, except hearty good will. Determining to put this to the proof, a few days after my arrival I ordered a general movement along the whole line, from Nice to Savona. This was in the beginning of April, 1796.

In three days we carried all the Austro-Sardinian posts which defended the heights of Liguria. The enemy, thus briskly attacked, collected his forces. We encountered him at *Montenotte* on the 10th; he was beaten. The 14th we attacked him at *Millesimo;* he was again beaten, and we separated the Austrians from the Pied-

montese. The latter took up a position at *Mondovi*, whilst the Austrians retreated to the Po, in order to cover Lombardy.

I beat the Piedmontese. In three days I carried all the positions of Piedmont, and we were within nine leagues of Turin, when I received an aid-de-camp, who came to ask for peace.

Then for the first time I considered myself not merely as a general, but as a man called to influence the fate of nations. I saw myself in history.

This peace changed my plan. It was no longer limited to the idea of making Italy the seat of war, but extended to the conquest of that country. I perceived that by enlarging the field of the revolution, I gave a more solid basis to its edifice. This

was the most effectual means of ensuring its final triumph.

The court of Piedmont had ceded to us all its strong places. It had delivered to us its territory. We were thus masters of the Alps and the Appenines. We secured our points of support, and were tranquil as to the practicability of effecting our retreat.

Under these auspicious circumstances I moved to attack the Austrians. I passed the Po at Placentia, and the Adda at *Lodi*; not without some difficulty: but Beaulieu retired, and I entered Milan.

The Austrians made incredible efforts to recover Italy. Five times I was obliged to defeat their armies, in order to finish the contest.

Once master of Italy, it was necessary to establish the revolutionary system, in order to unite that country to France by common principles and common interests: in other words, it was necessary to destroy the ancient order of things and establish *equality;* because this is the vital essence of revolutions. I foresaw that I should have the clergy, the nobility, and their dependents, against me. I expected resistance, and I determined to crush it by force of arms, but without disturbing the people.

I had achieved great deeds, but it was necessary to assume a corresponding tone and attitude. The revolution had destroyed every species of dignity in France: I could not restore to her the pomp of royalty: I gave her the lustre of victory and the lofty language of domination.

I resolved to become the protector of

Italy, and not her conqueror. I succeeded by maintaining the discipline of the army, by punishing revolt severely; but above all, by the establishment of the Cisalpine republic. By that institution I satisfied the avowed desire of the Italians for independence. I gave them high hopes of future greatness: it depended on themselves to realize these hopes by embracing our cause. They were allies whom I gave to France.

This alliance will long endure between the two nations, because it is founded on common interests and common services: they had the same opinions and the same springs of action. Without me they would have kept up their old enmity. Sure of Italy, I did not fear to risk myself in the very heart of Austria. I arrived in sight of Vienna, and I signed the treaty of

Campo Formio. It was a glorious act for France.

The party I had countenanced on the 18th Fructidor had remained master of the republic. I had favoured it because it was mine, and because it was the only one calculated to push on the revolution. The more I mingled in public affairs, the more I was convinced of the necessity of accomplishing the revolution, because it was the fruit of public opinion and of the age: every thing that retarded its progress prolonged the crisis.

Peace was made on the continent; we were only at war with England; but for want of a field of battle we were inactive. I was conscious of my powers: they were of a nature to distinguish me, but they were unemployed. I knew, however, that

in order to remain in sight I must fix attention, and the only means of doing this was by extraordinary undertakings; because men are grateful for excitation. In consequence of this opinion I undertook the expedition to Egypt. It was attributed to profound speculations on my part: but I had no other motive than to employ myself after the peace I had just concluded.

This expedition would give a high idea of the power of France; it would fix attention on its commander; it would surprise Europe by its boldness. These were more than sufficient motives for the undertaking; but I had not the slightest wish to dethrone the Grand Turk, or even to make myself a Pacha.

I prepared for my departure with pro-

found secrecy: it was necessary to success, and added to the singular character of the expedition.

The fleet set sail. I was obliged to destroy that nest of nobility at Malta* as I passed, because it served the views of the English. I was afraid lest some old leaven of honour might have tempted these knights to defend themselves, and retard me; fortunately, they surrendered even more ignominiously than I had expected.

The battle of Aboukir destroyed the fleet, and gave the English the ascendancy by sea. From that moment I anticipated the catastrophe:—for an army which has not the means of recruiting itself, always ends by capitulating.

* It is not possible to do justice to the original expression, *Cette gentilhomière de Malte.*—T.

In the mean time it was necessary to remain in Egypt, because there was no means of escaping from it. I determined to set a good face upon a bad affair. I succeeded tolerably.

I had a fine army; it was necessary to keep it in action, and I achieved the conquest of Egypt, in order to give it employment. By this conquest I opened to science the most brilliant field she ever explored.

Our soldiers, indeed, were a little surprised at finding themselves in the heritage of Sesostris; but they took it very well; and it was so singular to see Frenchmen among such ruins, that they themselves were diverted at it.

Having nothing more to do in Egypt, I

thought it would be interesting to visit Palestine, and attempt to conquer it. This expedition had a romantic air; I allowed myself to be seduced by it; but I was misinformed with regard to the obstacles I was to meet, and I did not take troops enough with me.

Having passed the desert, I learned that forces had been assembled at St. Jean d'Acre; I could not despise them; I was forced to march thither. The place was defended by a French engineer. I perceived it by the resistance it made. I was obliged to raise the siege: the retreat was disastrous. For the first time I had to encounter the opposing elements; but we were not overcome.

On my return to Egypt, I received the public journals by way of Tunis. From

them I learned the deplorable state of France, the disgrace of the Directory, and the success of the coalition. I thought I might serve my country a second time. No motive now detained me in Egypt: the enterprise was at an end. Any general was competent to sign a capitulation which circumstances would render inevitable; and I set out without any further design than that of re-appearing at the head of the armies to lead them back to victory.

On landing at Frejus, my presence excited enthusiasm in the people. My military glory re-animated those who were disheartened. The roads were crowded as I passed: my journey had the air of a triumph; and on my arrival at Paris I found that I was all-powerful in France.

I found the government in a state of anarchy; its imbecility had brought it to the verge of ruin. Every one was for saving his country, and every one proposed his plan. All these various schemes were confided to me; I was the pivot upon which every coalition turned; but there was not a single head capable of conducting any fixed plan. They all relied on me, because they all required a sword. I relied on no one, and chose the plan which suited my own views.

Fortune bore me to the head of affairs. I determined to be master of the revolution, for I did not choose to be merely its chief: that part did not suit me. I was then called upon to prepare the future fate of France—perhaps that of the world.

But it was necessary first to make war;

to make peace; to put down faction; to found my authority. It was necessary to put the huge machine, called government, in motion. I foresaw the obstacles to be encountered, and would have then preferred the simple trade of war; for I loved the authority of head quarters, and the emotion of the field of battle. In short, at that moment I felt more disposed to restore the military superiority of France, than to govern it.

But I had no choice in my destiny. I easily perceived that the reign of the Directory was near its end; that some efficient authority must be put in its place, in order to save the state; that there is nothing truly imposing but military glory. The Directory could then only be succeeded by me, or by a state of anarchy. The choice of France was not doubtful. Pub-

lic opinion, in this respect, enlightened my own.

I proposed to supply the place of the Directory by a Consulate; so far was I at that time from conceiving the idea of assuming sovereign power. The republicans proposed to elect two consuls; I demanded a third, because I did not choose to have an equal. The first place in this triumvirate was justly my due; it was all I aimed at.

My proposal was received by the republicans with distrust. They already perceived a dictator among the triumviri; they combined against me. Even the presence of Sieyes could not pacify them. He had taken upon him to draw up a constitution; but the Jacobins felt more terror at my sword, than confidence in the pen of their old Abbe.

All parties were now ranged under two banners: on one side were the republicans, who opposed my elevation, and on the other, all France demanding it. It was therefore inevitable at that period, because the majority always succeed. The first had established their head quarters in the council of five hundred; they made a resolute defence; we were obliged to win the battle of St. Cloud to bring about this revolution. At one time I thought it would have been carried by acclamation.

The wishes of the public had given me the first place in the state: the resistance that had been opposed to it did not alarm me, because it proceeded from persons blasted in the opinion of that public. The royalists had not appeared; they had been taken by surprise. The body of the people had confidence in me, because they

knew that the revolution could not have better security than mine. I derived my strength solely from being at the head of the interests created by that revolution; since, in opposing it, I should have taken the ground of the Bourbons.

It was important that all should be new in the nature of my power, in order that all kinds of ambition might find aliment. But there was nothing defined in it, and that was its defect.

By the constitution I was only the first magistrate of the republic; but my staff of office was a sword. There was an incompatibility between my constitutional rights and the ascendant which I held in virtue of my character and my actions. The public felt, as I did, that this state of things could not last; and every one took measures accordingly.

I found more courtiers than I wanted; they formed a train: and I was not at all in pain about the progress of my authority, but very much so as to the actual situation of France.

We had suffered ourselves to be beaten: the Austrians had recovered Italy, and overturned my labours. We had no army to employ offensively; there was not a sous in the exchequer, and no means of supplying it. The conscription only went on as it pleased the mayors. Sieyes had drawn up an inefficient and wordy constitution. All that constitutes the strength of a state was annihilated; the weak parts only remained.

Forced by circumstances, I thought it best to demand peace. I could then do it in good earnest, because it would have

made my fortune: later, it would have been disgraceful.

Mr. Pitt refused it; and never did statesman commit so great a blunder; for that was the only opening for the allies to make it with safety. France, by demanding peace, acknowledged that she was conquered; and nations may rise from every reverse if they do not consent to their own disgrace.

Mr. Pitt refused it. He saved me from committing a great error, and he extended the empire of the Revolution over all Europe—an empire that even my fall has not been able to destroy. Had he then left it to itself, it would have been confined to France.

Thus I was forced to go to war. Mas-

sena defended himself in Genoa; but the armies of the Republic no longer dared to cross either the Rhine or the Alps. It was then necessary to re-enter Italy and Germany, to dictate peace to Austria. Such was my plan; but I had neither soldiers, ordnance, nor small arms.

I called out the conscripts;—I set armourers to work;—I awakened the sentiment of national honour, which is never more than lulled in the breast of a Frenchman. I assembled an army: half of it still wore the clothing of the peasantry. Europe laughed at my soldiers; but she paid dearly for her momentary mirth.

I could not, however, openly undertake a campaign with such an army; but it was necessary to astonish the enemy, and profit by his surprise. General Suchet drew

him on towards the defiles of Nice; Massena protracted the defence of Genoa from day to day. I set out;—I advanced towards the Alps;—my presence, and the grandeur of the enterprise, animated the soldiers. They had no shoes, but they marched as if each belonged to the vanguard.

At no time of my life have I experienced a sentiment like that which I felt on entering the defiles of the Alps. The mountain echoes resounded with the shouts of the army. They announced an uncertain, but probable victory. I was again to see Italy—the theatre of my first campaign. My cannon slowly climbed the rocks. My first grenadiers reached the summit of St. Bernard. They threw up their hats, decorated with red feathers, into the air, and shouted for joy. The Alps were crossed, and we poured down like a torrent.

General L'Asne commanded the advanced guard. He seized Ivree, Verceil, Pavia, and secured the passage of the Po. The whole army crossed it without interruption.

Soldiers and generals—all were young. We had our fortune to make. We made light of fatigue, still lighter of danger. We were careless of every thing, but of that glory which is only to be obtained on the field of battle.

At the news of my arrival, the Austrians manœuvred upon Alexandria. Crowded into that town, at the moment I appeared before its walls, their columns spread themselves in front of the Bormida. I attacked them. Their artillery was superior to mine; it disordered our young battalions; they gave ground. The line was preser-

ved only by two battalions of the guards, and the forty-fifth. But I expected some corps that were marching in file. Dessaix's division arrives; the whole line rallies. Dessaix forms his column of attack, and carries the village of Marengo, upon which the centre of the enemy is posted. This great general was killed at the very moment in which he had decided an immortal victory.

The enemy seeks shelter under the walls of Alexandria. The bridges are too narrow for them to pass; a dreadful confusion ensues; we take bodies of artillery, and entire battalions. Crowded up beyond the Tanaro, without communication, without retreat—threatened on the rear by Massena and Suchet, with a victorious army in front, the Austrians submit. Melas begged to capitulate—it was unparal-

leled in the annals of war. The whole of Italy was restored to me, and the conquered army laid down their arms at the feet of our conscripts.

This day was the brightest of my life, for it was one of the brightest for France. All was changed for her; she was soon to enjoy a peace which she had conquered.—She lay down to rest like a lion. She must be happy, for she was great.

Faction was at rest; it was dazzled into silence. La Vendee was calmer; the Jacobins were forced to thank me for the victory, for it turned to their account. I had no longer any rivals.

The common danger and public enthusiasm had forced every party to join for the moment. Security divided them.

Wherever there is not an incontestable centre of power, men will be found who will hope to incline it towards themselves. It is what happened to mine. My authority was only that of a temporary magistracy; it was therefore not unalterable. Whoever had vanity, and believed himself possessed of talent, began a campaign against me. The tribune became the citadel whence they commenced their attack, under the name of the executive power.

If I had yielded to their declamations, it had been all over with the state. It had too many enemies to venture to divide its forces, or to lose time in words. The recent trial was a tolerably rude proof, but it was not sufficient to silence those who will always prefer the interest of their private vanity to that of their country. They resisted the taxes, abused the govern-

ment, hampered its proceedings, and kept back the recruits for the army, in hopes of gaining popularity.

Had this continued, we should have fallen a prey to the enemy in fifteen days. We were not yet strong enough to hazard it. My power was too new to be invulnerable. The Consulate would have faded like the Directory, if I had not destroyed the opposition by a stroke of policy. I deposed the factious tribunes. The world of Paris called this to *eliminate** them; this term became a *bon mot*.

This trifling event, which is now forgot-

* This is an awkward and periphrastic translation, but the real English *expel*, or in the other sense, *turn-out*, would never do: the word had till then, even in France, been rarely used.—T.

ten, changed the constitution of France, both internally and with regard to Europe. The enemies of the revolution, both within and without, were too violent not to force her to adopt the form of a dictatorship, as every other republic has done in moments of danger. Balanced powers can only answer in peaceful times. For this reason, my power was increased every time it appeared in danger, in order to prevent a relapse.

I should, perhaps, have done better, had I frankly insisted on the dictatorship at once, since I was accused of aspiring to it. Every one would have been a judge of what they called my ambition: I believe it would have been better; for monsters appear greater at a distance than near by. The dictatorship would have had the advantage of removing all doubts as to the

future; of leaving opinion undivided, and of intimidating the enemy by showing the resolution of France.

But I perceived that this high authority was placed, as of itself, in my hands. I had no occasion to receive it officially. I exercised it in fact, if not by right, and it was sufficient to survive the crisis, and to save France and the revolution.

My task, then, was to establish the revolution, by giving it a lawful character, that it might be acknowledged and legitimated by the commonwealth of Europe.

All revolutions have undergone the same conflicts. Ours could not expect to be exempt from them; but she might claim in her turn the right of citizenship in that commonwealth.

I knew that before we proposed it, our principles must be fixed, our legislation agreed upon, and our excesses repressed. I believed myself strong enough to succeed, and I was not mistaken.

The principle of the revolution was the abolition of castes, or, in other words, to establish equality. I respected it. The office of legislation is to regulate principles. In this spirit I made laws. Excesses had shown themselves in the existence of factions. I did not notice them, and they disappeared. They had shown themselves in the destruction of religious worship; I re-established it. In the existence of emigrants; I recalled them. In the general disorder of administration; I reformed it. In the ruin of the finances; I restored them. In the want of an opportunity competent to govern France; I gave her that authority

by taking into my own hands the reins of government.

Few men have done so much as I then did in so short a time. History will one day record what France was at my accession, and what she was when she gave laws to Europe.

I had no occasion to employ arbitrary power to accomplish these stupendous works. Probably it would not have been refused me: but would not have accepted it, because I have always detested whatever is arbitrary. I loved good order and laws. I made many, and I made them severe and precise, but just; because a law which permits no exception is always just. I caused them to be rigorously observed, for such is the duty of the throne; but I respected them. They will survive me, and that will reward my labours.

All seemed to prosper. The state revived; good order began to reappear. I devoted myself ardently to the work, but I felt that there was something wanting in the system—that is to say, a definitive.

However strong my desire might be to establish permanently the principles of the revolution, I clearly saw that I should have to overcome great obstacles before I succeeded: for there was a necessary antipathy between the old and new systems. They formed two masses whose interests were precisely in an inverse ratio. All the governments which still subsisted by virtue of the ancient law of nations, saw themselves exposed by the principles of the revolution, which had no security itself but in treating with the enemy, or destroying him if he refused to acknowledge it.

This struggle was to decide, as by a last appeal, on the renewal of the social order of Europe. I was at the head of the great faction which would fain have destroyed the system on which the world had gone on since the time of the Romans. As such, I was set up as a mark for the hatred of all who were interested in preserving their Gothic rust. A less decided character than mine might have temporized, and left a part, at least, of this question, to be disposed of by time.

But as soon as I had sounded the two factions to the very bottom—as soon as I had perceived that they really divided the world as at the time of the Reformation, I understood that there could be no compact between them, because their interests clashed too much. I perceived that the more the crisis was shortened the better

for the people. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary that we should have with us the greater part of Europe, in order to incline the balance in our favour. I could only command this preponderance by the right of the strongest, because it is the only one acknowledged between nations. It was, therefore, also necessary to become the strongest; for I was not only called to govern France, but to subdue the world before her; otherwise she would have been crushed by the world.

I never had a choice in the course I pursued, for it was always commanded by events; because our danger was imminent: and the 31st of March proved how far it was to be dreaded, and how impossible it was to teach the old and new systems to abide together in peace. It was, therefore, easy to foresee, that as long as there

was a parity of force between the two, there would be war, open or disguised. Any peace that might be signed would be be but to gain a breathing time. France, then, as the head-quarters of the revolution, was bound to hold herself in readiness to resist the tempest. For this purpose, it was requisite that there should be unity in the government, to ensure strength; union in the nation, to produce common aim; and confidence in the people, that they might consent to the sacrifices necessary to command victory.

But every thing was precarious in the consular system, because nothing was in its proper sphere. There was a nominal republic, and a real sovereignty; a feeble representation of the people, and a strong executive power; obedient authorities, and a preponderating army.

Nothing can go on well in a political system, where words and things are at variance. Government debases itself by the continual fictions it must use: it falls into that kind of contempt which falsehood inspires, because, whatever is false, is weak. The time is past for finessing in politics: the people are too well informed: the gazettes disclose too much. There is but one secret for governing the world; it is, *be strong:* in strength there can be neither error nor deception: it is truth undisguised.

I felt the weakness of my situation—the absurdity of my Consulate. Something solid was required as a rallying point for the revolution. I was named consul for life. It was only a life-rent of superiority; insufficient in itself, because its duration depended upon a contingency; and nothing

ruins confidence like the certainty of a change. But it answered for the time in which it was adopted.

Meantime, what had I gained by the truce of Amiens? I had hazarded an imprudent expedition, for which I was reproached, and justly, for it was worthless in itself.

I tried to recover St. Domingo; I had good reasons for the attempt. France was too much hated by the allies, to dare to remain inactive during the peace: it was necessary she should be always formidable; and it was necessary to give some scope to idle curiosity. The army required to be constantly in motion, to prevent it from falling off: besides, I was glad to exercise our marine.

The expedition was ill conducted: wherever I was not present, things went wrong. But this was immaterial, as it was easy to perceive that the English ministry were about to break the truce; and if we had subdued St. Domingo, it would have been only for them.

Every day augmented my security; until the event of the 3d Nivose showed me that I was standing upon a volcano. This conspiracy was unforeseen; it was the only one which the police had not anticipated. It was communicated to but few, and therefore remained undiscovered.

I escaped by miracle: the joy testified for my escape amply recompensed me. The time of the conspiracy was ill chosen: nothing was ready for the Bourbons in France.

The guilty were sought for. I can say with truth that I accused only the mob-patriots;* for whenever a crime was committed, every one was disposed to give them the honour of it. I was very much astonished, when the result of the inquiries proved, that the good people of Rue St. Nicaise were indebted to the royalists for being blown up.

I fancied the royalists honest, because they accused us of not being so; and I believed them incapable of the boldness and the villany of such a project. In fact, the project was that of a few who robbed stage coaches; a set that was talked of and flattered, but little respected by the party.

* *Brutus du Coin*, literally, Brutuses of the Minories.—T.

Thus the royalists, who had been quite forgotten since the pacification of La Vendee, re-appeared on the political horizon: it was a natural consequence of the increase of my authority. I was building up royalty; it was poaching upon their grounds.

They never perceived that my monarchy had nothing to do with theirs; mine was all in fact; theirs in right: theirs was founded in custom; mine did without: it accorded with the genius of the age; theirs struggled to fetter it.

The republicans were alarmed at the height to which circumstances had raised me. They distrusted me—they trembled lest I should re-establish an old-fashioned royalty by the assistance of my army. Some of the royalists kept up these reports, and

delighted to represent me as apeing their ancient monarchs: others, more adroit, represented me as having fallen in love with the character of Monk, and that I had taken the pains to restore power, only to make a present of it to the Bourbons, when it should be worthy of their acceptance.

Weak minds, who could not fathom me, believed these reports. They supported the royalists, and endeavoured to render me odious to the people and the army, for they began to doubt my attachment to their cause. I could not allow such an opinion to gain ground, because it tended to disunite us.

It was necessary, at any price, to undeceive France, the royalists, and all Europe. A persecution in detail against words can produce no other than bad effects, because

it does not strike the evil at its root. Besides, it had become impossible in this age of public appeal, in which the exile of a woman disturbed all France.

Unfortunately, there happened at this important crisis, one of those chances which destroy the best resolutions. The police discovered some trifling plots of the royalists, the source of which was beyond the Rhine; an august personage was implicated in them. All the circumstances squared, in an incredible manner, with those which led me to strike a decided political blow. The death of the Duke d'Enghien would put the question that agitated France at rest. I gave the order.

A man of great judgment, and who ought to know something of these matters, said of this outrage, that it was more

than a crime—it was a fault. Begging pardon of that personage—it was a crime, and not a fault. I know well the value of words. The crime of the unfortunate prince was confined to a few miserable intrigues, in concert with some dowager baronesses at Strasbourg. He was playing his game. His intrigues were watched, and could neither affect my safety, nor that of France. He perished, the victim of policy, and a concatenation of circumstances.

His death was not a fault, because all the consequences I foresaw came to pass.

The war with England was renewed, because it is impossible for that country to remain long at peace. The territory of England is become too small for its population. She requires a monopoly of the

four quarters of the globe to enable her to exist. War procures this monopoly, because it gives England the right of destruction at sea. It is her safeguard.

The war languished for want of a field to fight on. England was obliged to hire some of it on the continent; but the harvest required time to grow. Austria had received such severe lessons, that her ministers dared not propose war so soon, however willing they might be to earn their money. Prussia was thriving in her neutrality. Russia had made a fatal trial of war in Switzerland. Italy and Spain had entered with but little reservation into my system. The continent was at rest.

For want of something better, I set about a project for invading England. I never thought of realizing it, for it would

have failed: not that the actual landing would have been impossible, but a retreat would have been so. There is not a single Englishman who would not have taken up arms to savē the honour of his country; and the French army, left, without help, to their mercy, would have perished, or surrendered. I made such a trial in Egypt indeed, but in London the stake was too deep.

As threats cost nothing, since I had nothing to do with my troops, it was as well to keep them in garrison on the coast, as elsewhere. This demonstration obliged England to adopt a ruinous system of defence. It was so much gained.

In revenge, however, there was a conspiracy formed against me. I may give the honour of this to the emigrant princes,

for it was truly royal. They had set on foot an army of conspirators, and accordingly we had notice of it within twenty-ty four hours; so trusty were their confidants.

However, as I resolved to punish men who sought to overturn the state, (which is contrary to all laws, divine and human,) I was obliged to wait till undeniable proofs were collected before I arrested them.

Pichegru was at the head of these machinations. This man, who had more bravery than talent, wanted to act the part of Monk; he was cut out for it.

These schemes gave me little uneasiness, because I knew their aim, and that public opinion did not favour them. If the royalists had assassinated me, they would

not have been a whit nearer the mark. There is a time for all things.

I soon learnt that Moreau was implicated in the plot, and this was a delicate affair to handle, because his popularity was tremendous. It was their interest to gain him. His reputation was too high for us to remain friends. I could not be every thing, while he was nothing. I wished to find a decent pretext for separating. He furnished it.

It was said that I was jealous of him: there was but little truth in this; but he was very jealous of me, and with reason. I esteemed him, because he was a good soldier. His friends were those who hated me; that is to say, a great many. They would have made him a hero, had he been put to death. I resolved to show him as

he was—a man of no influence. I succeeded; absence was fatal to him; his friends forgot him, and he has been no more thought of.

Less delicacy was required with regard to the other criminals. They were old hackneyed conspirators, of whom it was important to purge France for ever. We succeeded; for from that time they never re-appeared.

I was overwhelmed with petitions. All the women and children in Paris were in commotion. Every body's pardon was sued for. I had the weakness to send a few of the criminals to the state prisons, instead of allowing justice to take its course.

I even now regret this kind of indul-

gence, because in a sovereign it is nothing more than a culpable weakness. He has but one duty to fulfil towards the state; that of enforcing the laws. Every compromise with crime becomes a crime in the crown. The prerogative of mercy ought never to be exerted in favour of the guilty; it should be reserved for those unfortunate persons who are absolved by conscience, though condemned by law.

Pichegru was found strangled in his bed. Of course it was said to be by my orders. I was totally ignorant concerning the matter. I cannot perceive what interest I could have had in anticipating his public execution. He was not better than the others; and I had a tribunal to judge him, and soldiers to shoot him. I never did a useless act in my life.

My authority increased, because it had been threatened. Nothing in France was prepared for a counter-revolution. The public regarded the intrigues of the royalists as only calculated to bring on the horror of civil war and anarchy. The people wished at any price to avert these evils, and rallied round me, because I promised to defend them. France sought repose under the shelter of my sword. The public voice—(history will not contradict me) —the public voice called me to the throne of France.

The republican form of government could no longer exist, because ancient monarchies will not be converted into republics. The desire of France was national greatness. To raise and sustain the edifice of national greatness, it was requisite to destroy faction, to consolidate the labours

of the revolution, and to fix irrevocably the limits of the state. I alone promised France to fulfil these conditions. France called me to reign over her.

I could not become a king; the title was worn out; it excited definite and preconceived ideas; and it was important that my title, like the nature of my power, should be new. I was not the heir of the Bourbons. No common man could venture to sit on their throne. I took the name of Emperor—because it was greater, and less defined.

Never was revolution so peaceable as that which overturned the republic for which so much blood had been shed. It was because the thing was still the same; the name alone was changed. On these grounds the republicans did not dread the empire.

Besides, such revolutions as do not interfere with the interests of individuals, are always peaceable.

The revolution was at length accomplished. It became inexpugnable under a permanent dynasty. The republic had only satisfied opinion; the empire guarantied private interest as well as public opinion.

These interests were those of an immense majority, because the empire confirmed equality. Democracy, both in fact and in right, existed. Liberty alone had been restricted, because it is worse than useless in moments of danger; for liberty is of no use to any but the enlightened part of the nation; equality is valuable to all. Hence my power remained popular even amidst the reverses which have overwhelmed France.

My authority did not rest, like that of the old monarchies, upon a scaffolding of castes and subordinate ranks; it was immediate and self-dependent; for the empire consisted only of the nation and myself. But in that nation all were equally called to the exercise of public functions. The point of departure was no obstacle. A disposition upwards was universal in the state, and in this disposition consisted my strength.

I did not invent this system; it arose out of the ruins of the Bastile. It is the result of the moral civilization which time has wrought in Europe; all attempts to destroy it will be vain; it will be maintained by the nature of things, because practice will always ultimately be found to conform to power. Power was no longer in the hands of the nobility, from the mo-

ment they declined serving as the sole militia of the state, and permitted the *tiers-etat* to bear arms.

Power abandoned the clergy when the people, by beginning to reason, had virtually become protestants. It abandoned government because the nobility and clergy were disabled from fulfilling their offices; that is to say, because they could no longer support the throne. Routine and prejudice had also lost their power, because routine and prejudice had been unmasked before the people.

The social compact was dissolved long before the revolution, because things and words had ceased to coincide.

The downfall of prejudice had laid bare the sources of power; its weakness was discovered; it fell on the first assault.

Authority was, therefore, to be built up again upon a new plan. The whole train of habits and prejudices were to be passed over: that mental blindness, called faith, was to be of no avail. There were no inherited rights, but every thing was to rest upon fact—that is, power.

Thus I did not mount the throne like the heir of an ancient dynasty, to sit there luxuriously under the shadow of habit and illusion, but I placed myself there to execute the institutions willed by the people; to wield the law under the sanction of moral right; and to render France formidable, in order to maintain her independence.

The opportunity was soon afforded. England was tired of seeing my troops upon the coast. She resolved to get rid

of them, and, purse in hand, she sought allies on the continent. She could not fail to find them.

The ancient dynasties were appalled at seeing me on the throne. Whatever civilities might pass between us, it was too clear that I was not one of them; for I reigned by virtue of a system which must break down the altar time had consecrated to them. I was in myself a revolution. The empire was not less dreadful to them than the republic: in fact, they feared it more—for it was more healthy.

It was policy to attack me as soon as possible, before I attained to my full strength.

The chances of the struggle about to take place were of the last importance to

me. I was to learn the very measure of the hatred I inspired. I was to learn which were the sovereigns whom fear would force to fall in with the system of the empire, and which of them would perish rather than coalesce with it.

This struggle could not but lead to new political combinations in Europe. I was to fall, or to become its master.

I had just annexed Piedmont to France, because it was necessary that Lombardy should be dependent on the empire. The cry was raised against ambition; the lists were prepared for the fight; the act of annexation was the signal for it.

The battle could not fail of being obstinate. The Austrians assembled all their forces, and the Russians were determined to join with all theirs.

The young Alexander had just ascended the throne: as children like to do the contrary of what their fathers have done, he declared war against me, because his father had made peace. For we had as yet no quarrel with the Russians; but the women and the courtiers had settled the matter. They thought they were only acting in good taste, because I was not the fashion in the great world; while, unconsciously, they were laying the foundations of the system to which Russia will one day owe her greatness.

The coalition never opened a campaign more awkwardly. The Austrians fancied they could take me by surprise, but their scheme was unsuccessful.

They overran Bavaria without waiting for the Russians; by forced marches they

reached the Rhine. My columns had quitted the camp of Boulogne; they were marching through France; we crossed the Rhine at Strasbourg. My advanced guard met the Austrians at Ulm, and routed them. I marched upon Vienna by the high road; I entered it without an obstacle. An Austrian general had forgotten to destroy the bridges over the Danube. I crossed the river; I should have done so at all events, but I was the sooner in Moravia.

The Russians were but just coming up: the wreck of the Austrians sought safety under their banners. The enemy attempted to make a stand at Austerlitz; he was beaten. The Russians retired in good order, and left me the empire of Austria.

The Emperor Francis demanded an in-

terview; I granted him one in a ditch. He sued for peace—I gave it him; for what could I have made of his dominions? they were not moulded for the revolution. But, to weaken him, I demanded Venice for Lombardy, and the Tyrol for Bavaria, that I might reward my friends at the expense of my enemies—it was the least I could do.

It was, however, not a time to dispute: peace was signed. I proposed the same terms to the Russians: Alexander refused them.

This was noble: for by accepting peace, he would have accepted the humiliation of Austria.

By refusing, he showed firmness under calamity, and confidence in fortune. The

refusal itself taught me that the fate of the world would depend on us two.

The campaign was renewed: I followed the Russians in their retreat. A new theatre opened itself to our arms. I was about to see the old ground of anarchy and of liberty bent under the yoke of a stranger: the Poles only waited my arrival in order to throw it off.

The greatest error I committed during my reign was neglecting the advantages I might have derived from the Poles. I perceived the importance of restoring Poland, that it might be a barrier against Russia, and counterbalance Austria; but circumstances were not at that time favourable for realizing such a plan.

Besides, the Poles did not appear to me

fit for my designs. They are an enthusiastic, but frivolous people. They do every thing from fancy—nothing from system: their enthusiasm is strong, but they can neither regulate nor prolong it. The nation bears its ruin in its character.

Perhaps by giving the Poles a plan, a system, a fixed object, they might have formed themselves in time.

Although my disposition was not to do things by halves, I did no more in Poland —and I repented it. I advanced in the midst of winter toward the north; the climate did not at all alarm the soldiers; their moral state was excellent. I had to fight an army, master of its own ground, and in its own climate. It awaited me on the frontiers of Russia; I sought it there, that my troops might not languish and

waste in wretched cantonments. I met the enemy at Eylau: the affair was bloody and indecisive.

If the Russians had attacked us the next day, we should have been beaten; but happily their generals are seldom inspired. They gave me time to attack them at Friedland—victory was less doubtful. Alexander had defended himself valiantly—he proposed peace. It was honourable to both nations, for they had struggled with equal bravery. Peace was signed at Tilsit; it was in the spirit of good faith: I attest the Czar himself.

Such was the issue of the first efforts of the coalition against the empire I had just founded. It raised the glory of our arms, but it left the question undecided between Europe and me, for our enemies had only

been humbled; they were neither destroyed nor changed. We were at the point whence we set out; and when I signed the articles of peace, I foresaw a new war.

War was inevitable as long as the chances brought about no new combinations, and as long as England should have a personal interest in prolonging it.

But it was important to make use of the temporary tranquillity I had restored on the continent, to enlarge the basis of my empire, that it might be possessed of sufficient solidity to resist a future attack. The throne was hereditary in my family, which thus began a new dynasty, that time, which has legitimated so many others, might consecrate. From the days of Charlemagne no crown had been bestowed with equal solemnity. I had re-

ceived it with the consent of the people and the sanction of the church: my family, called to the throne, could not remain mingled among the ordinary classes of society—it would have been an incongruity.

I was rich in conquests. It was requisite to unite these states intimately with the system of the empire, in order to increase its preponderance. There are no bonds between nations but those of common interest. Therefore, a community of interests between us and the conquered countries was absolutely necessary. To accomplish this end, I had only to assimilate their ancient social constitution to ours, and to place at the head of these new institutions, rulers interested in maintaining them.

I accomplished these purposes by placing my family on the vacant thrones.

Lombardy was the most important of these states, because the house of Austria must for ever regret it. I did not choose to do it the favour of placing one of my brothers on its throne. I alone was able to bear the iron crown, and I put it upon my own head.

By this measure I gave confidence to the Lombards, for by it I took their affairs into my own hands.

The new state received the name of the kingdom of Italy, because the title was greater, and spoke more directly to the imagination of the Italians.

The throne of Naples was vacant.

Queen Caroline, after having deluged the streets of Naples with blood, and given up the kingdom to the English, had been driven out a second time. That unhappy country needed a master to save it from anarchy, and from the effects of revenge. One of my brothers ascended the throne.

Holland had long lost the energy which constitutes a republic. She had no longer sufficient strength to play that part. There had been proofs of this, at the time of the invasion in 99. I had no reason to suspect, that the Prince of Orange was regretted, from the manner in which he had been treated. Holland, then, seemed to need a sovereign. I gave her another of my brothers.

The youngest was young enough to wait. The fourth had no desire for a crown; he had fled to avoid one.

No republic remained but Switzerland. It was not worth while to change the form to which its people were accustomed. The only one I made of my authority in that country, was to prevent them cutting each other's throats. They were not particularly grateful.

But while thus forming states in alliance with France, and dependent on the empire, it became necessary to incorporate with the mother country other portions of territory, in order to preserve its preponderance in the system.

For this reason I joined Piedmont to France, and not to Italy. I also added to it Genoa and Parma. These additions were worthless in themselves, for I might have made good Italians of these people; they became but sorry Frenchmen. But

the empire did not consist of France alone, but of the family estates, and of foreign allies. It was essential to keep a certain proportion between these elements. Every new alliance required a new annexation. At every step the people raised the cry of ambition. But my ambition did not consist in wishing for a few square leagues, more or less, of land, but in the triumph of my cause.

Now, this cause consisted not solely in opinion, but in the weight that either party could place in the balance, and these square leagues were of consequence in the scale, because the world is made up of such.

Thus I augmented the mass of power that I set in motion. It required neither talent nor address to bring about these

changes. An act of my will sufficed; for these nations were too petty to have one of their own when I appeared. They depended on the momentum given to the aggregate of the imperial system. The radiating point of that system was France.

My work required consolidation by giving France new institutions conformable to the new social order she had adopted. The age was to be created anew for me, as I had been for it.

I had to become a legislator, after having been a warrior.

It was not possible to make the revolution retrace its steps; for that would have been making the strong submit anew to the weak, which is unnatural. I had, therefore, to seize the spirit of the times,

and to form an analogous system of legislation. I think I succeeded—the system will survive me; and I have left Europe an inheritance which can never be alienated.

There was, in fact, nothing in the state but a huge democracy, swayed by a dictator. This kind of government is convenient as to the executive part; but its nature is temporary, because, in the hands of a dictator, power is but a life-rent. I sought to make it perpetual, by lasting institutions and corporations for life, that I might place them between the throne and the democracy. I could do nothing with the old implements of custom and delusion. I was obliged to create every thing anew by realities.

Thus I was forced to found my princi-

ples of legislation upon the immediate interests of the majority, and to create my corporations by that interest, because interest is, of all earthly things, the most real and durable.

I made laws, the activity of which was stupendous, but uniform. Their principle was to maintain equality. This is so strongly impressed upon my code, that, of itself, it will suffice to preserve it.

I instituted an intermediate caste. It was democratical, because it was always open to all; it was monarchical, because it could not die.

This body was to perform that part in the new system which the nobility had acted in the old; that is, to support the throne. But it resembled it in nothing. The ancient nobility existed entirely by

privilege. Mine had nothing but power. The ancient nobility had no merit but that of being exclusive. Every man who had distinguished himself had a right to belong to the new: it was, in fact, only a civic crown. The people attached to it no other idea. Every member had deserved it by his actions; every man might obtain it at the same price; it was offensive to none.

The desire for promotion was the main spring of action; it is the characteristic of revolutions. It agitated the whole nation. Ambition had seized the public mind. I encouraged this spirit by splendid rewards; they were bestowed by public gratitude. The highest honours were still conformable to the spirit of eqaulity; for the meanest soldier might obtain them by brilliant actions.

After the confusion of the revolution it was of consequence to re-establish good order, because it is the sign of strength and durability.

Ministers and judges were essential to the state; for on them alone depended the maintenance of good order, that is to say, the execution of the laws. I inspired them with the spirit which animated the people and the army. I bestowed on them the same rewards. I created them members of an order which had been rendered splendid by military achievement. I made it common to all the servants of the public, because the first of virtues is devotion to one's country.

Thus I converted the national enthusiasm into a general bond, which united all classes by a mutual interest; for no class

was subordinate—no class was exclusive. An intermediate body, culled from the flower of the nation, formed around me. It was attached to the imperial system by its avocations, its interests, and its opinions. This numerous body, although in- [redacted] with the civil and military power, [redacted] wledged by the people, because [redacted] osen from among themselves. [redacted] ded in it, because their interests [redacted] ame with its own. This body [redacted] oppressive nor exclusive. It [redacted] ty a magistracy.

[redacted] pire rested on a vigorous organization. The army had been formed in the school of war, where it had learned to fight and to suffer.

The civil magistrates had accustomed themselves to a strict execution of the

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laws, because I forbad either compromise or explanation. Thus they became possessed of practice and despatch. I had given a regular and uniform impulse, because there was but one watch-word throughout the empire. Thus every spring in the machine was in motion, but the movements took place only within the bounds I had assigned.

I put a stop to public dilapidation by making one central point for all exchequer business. I left nothing vague in this department; because every thing should be clear with regard to money. I left nothing in the power of the demi-responsible provincial officers, because I had found, by experience, that such a plan serves only to enrich a few petty peculators at the expense of the treasury, the people, and the government.

I redeemed public credit by taking nothing on credit.

For the system of loans, which had ruined France, I substituted that of taxation, which has supported it.

I organized the conscription—a severe, but grand law, and well worthy of a people which cherishes its glory and its liberty; for it should entrust its defence to none but itself.

I opened new channels of commerce. I united Italy to France by cutting through the Alps in four different places. The various improvements of this nature which I accomplished appear almost impossible.

I caused agriculture to prosper by maintaining the laws which protect private pro-

perty, and by distributing the public burdens equally.

I added great monuments to those already possessed by France. They were to be the memorials of its glory. I thought they would ennoble the minds of our descendants. The people became attached to these proud land-marks of their history.

My throne shone only with the lustre of arms. The French love grandeur even in its outward show. I caused palaces to be decorated. I assembled a numerous court: I gave it a character of austerity, for any other would have been incongruous. There were no amusements at my court. Therefore women played but an insignificant part, where every thing was consecrated to the state. Indeed, they always detested

me for that reason. Louis XV. suited them much better.

My great work was hardly sketched out when a new enemy appeared unexpectedly in the lists.

Prussia had remained at peace for ten years; France had been grateful for it; the allies were enraged at it: they had abused her, but she had prospered.

Her neutrality had been of peculiar importance to me during the last campaign; to secure it I had made some overtures respecting a cession of Hanover. I thought such an offer amply compensated for a slight violation of territory which I had permitted, in order to accelerate the march of a division, which I was in haste to have on the Danube.

England having rejected the proposals for peace which we had transmitted to her according to our custom, when we signed the treaty of Tilsit, Prussia demanded the cession of Hanover.

I was willing to bestow this boon upon her; but I thought it high time for her court to declare itself frankly for us, by embracing our system in good earnest. We could not do every thing by the sword; policy should also be resorted to, and this appeared a fair opportunity for its exercise.

But I perceived that Prussia had no such intentions, and that she thought I was amply repaid by her neutrality. It therefore became absurd to aggrandize a country I could not depend upon. I was out of humour; and did not calculate sufficiently that, by giving territory to Prussia, I should

conciliate her, and ensure her support. I refused every thing, and Hanover was otherwise disposed of.

The Prussians complained loudly, because I would not give them the property of another. They murmured at the slight violation of their territory the preceding year. They suddenly found out that they were the guardians of the glory of Frederick the Great; they grew warm. A sort of national tumult agitated the nobility; England hastened to subsidize them, and their movements acquired consistency.

If the Prussians had attacked me while I was at war with Russia, they might have done me a serious injury; but it was so absurd to come, right or wrong, and declare war against us, more in the manner of a school-boy's rebellion than any thing

else, that it was some time before I could credit it.

Nothing was, however, more true; and we were again obliged to take the field.

I certainly expected to beat the Prussians; but I thought it would require more time. I took measures to repel such aggressions as I suspected might be made against me in other quarters; but I found them unnecessary.

By a singular chance, the Prussians did not hold out two hours. By another chance, their generals had never thought of defending places that might have held out three months. I was master of the country in a few days.

The celerity of this overthrow proved

to me that the war had not been popular in Prussia. I ought to have profited by this discovery, and to have organized Prussia after our own plans; but I neglected this important step.

The empire had acquired an immense preponderance by the battle of Jena. The public began to look upon my cause as won: I perceived it by the change of measures towards me: I began to believe the same thing myself; and this opinion made me commit errors.

The system on which I had founded the empire was innately at variance with all the ancient dynasties. I knew that there must be mortal strife between them and me. Vigorous means were, therefore, to be taken to shorten it as much as possible, in

order to gain the suffrages of kings and nations.

On the one hand, I should have changed the form and personal government of all the states that war placed at my disposal, because revolutions are not brought about by continuing the same men and the same measures. I ought to have known, that, by preserving those governments, I should have them always against me: it was recalling my enemies to life.

If, on the other hand, I chose to retain the old governments, I ought to have made them sharers in my greatness, by forcing them to accept of titles and territory, together with my alliance.

By following either of these plans, according to circumstances, I should have

extended the frontiers of the revolution rapidly. Our alliances would have been solid, because they would have been made with the people: I should have bestowed on them the advantages, together with the principles, of the revolution: I should have removed the scourge of war which had afflicted them for twenty years, and which ended by raising them all against us.

It is most probable that the majority of the nations of the continent would have accepted this grand alliance, and Europe would have been recast on a new plan analogous to the state of her civilization.

I reasoned well, but acted ill. Instead of changing the Prussian dynasty, as I had threatened, I restored their estates, after having parcelled them out. Poland was

not pleased, because I did not free the portion of her territory that Prussia had seized. The kingdom of Westphalia was discontented at not obtaining more; and Prussia, enraged at what I had taken away, vowed eternal hatred towards me.

I fancied, I know not why, that kings, dispossessed by the right of conquest, might become grateful for any part of their dominions that might be left them. I fancied that they might, after all their reverses, become sincere allies, because it was safest to do so. I fancied that I might thus extend the connexions of the empire without taking on myself the odium of revolution. I thought there was something noble in taking away and restoring crowns. I allowed myself to be seduced by it. I was mistaken, and such faults can never be repaired.

I tried at least to correct what I had done in Prussia, by organizing the confederation of the Rhine, because I hoped to keep one in check by the other. To form this confederation, I aggrandized the states of some sovereigns, at the expense of those of a rabble of petty princes, who answered no end but that of dissipating the money of their subjects, without doing them any good. I thus attached to my cause the sovereigns whose power I had enlarged, by the very interest of their aggrandizement. I made them conquerors in spite of themselves. But they found the trade agree with them. They were sufficiently willing to make common cause with me, and they were faithful to that cause as long as it was possible.

The continent was thus at peace for the fourth time. I had extended the surface

and the weight of the Empire. My immediate power extended from the Adriatic to the mouths of the Weser: my power over opinion throughout all Europe.

But Europe felt, as I did, that this pacification could not be durable, because there were too many conflicting elements, and that by compromising, I had only put off the evil day.

England was the vital principle of resistance. I had no means of attacking her hand to hand, and I was sure that the continental war would be perpetually renewed as long as the English ministry had wherewith to pay its expenses. This might last long, as the profits of the war would feed the war. It was a vitious circle, the result of which must be the ruin of the Continent. A means was therefore to be de-

vised for destroying the profits which England derived from maritime war, in order to ruin the credit of the English ministry. To this end the continental system was proposed to me. I thought it good, and adopted it. Few people understood that system; they determined to see nothing in it but a scheme to raise the price of coffee. Its design was widely different.

It was to have ruined the trade of England. But in that it failed of its purpose, for, like other prohibitions, it produced increased prices, which are always favourable to commerce; and because it could not be so complete as to prevent a contraband trade.

But the continental system was also to answer the purpose of plainly marking out our friends and foes. There could be no

deception here. Attachment to the continental system betokened attachment to our cause, for that system was at once our banner and palladium.

This contested system was indispensable at the time I adopted it; for a great empire must not only have a general tendency to direct its policy, but its economy ought to have a parallel direction. Industry must have a vent like every thing else, in order to act and to prosper. France had none until I opened one by establishing the continental system.

Before the Revolution, the economy of France had been turned towards the colonies, and exchange. It was the fashion of the day. It had great success. But, however much that success might be extolled, its only consequence was the ruin

of the state finance, the destruction of public credit, the overthrow of the military system, the loss of all respect abroad, and the ruin of agriculture. And, finally, these successes had led France to sign a treaty of commerce, which made her dependant on England for supplies.

France, indeed, possessed fine seaports, and some merchants of enormous fortune.

The maritime system had been completely destroyed by the war; the seaports were ruined: no human power could restore to them what the revolution had annihilated. It, therefore, required a fresh impulse to be given to the spirit of trade, in order to revive the domestic industry of France. The only means to accomplish this was to deprive England of the monopoly of manufactures, to create a manufac-

turing interest, and to include it in the general economy of the state. I was forced to create the continental system.

Nothing less than this system could avail, because the manufactures required an enormous premium to induce capitalists to advance the sums necessary for the establishment of the whole manufactories of a country.

The event was in my favour; I removed the seat of industry, and made it cross the sea. It has made such rapid strides on the Continent, that it has now nothing to fear. If France wishes to thrive, let her keep my system, and change its name; if she chooses to fall off, let her engage in maritime pursuits, which the English will destroy the first time they go to war. I was forced to carry the continental system to extremities, because I had in view not

only the good of France, but the annoyance of England. We could receive colonial produce only through her, whatever flag might be borrowed for the occasion, therefore we received as little as possible. There was no better way of doing this than raising the prices to an extravagant height. The political end was fulfilled; the exchequer gained by it, but it drove the old women to despair, and they have had their revenge. Daily experience proved the expediency of the continental system, for the state flourished in spite of the burden of the war. The taxes were entire; public credit was equal to the interest of money; the spirit of improvement appeared in agriculture as well as manufactures; country villages, not less than the streets of Paris, were rebuilt; roads and canals encouraged the industry of the interior; some new improvement appear-

ed weekly: I made sugar from turnips, and soda from salt. The development of science kept pace with industry.

It would have been folly to depart from a system at the very moment when it was producing its fruits. It required rather to be strengthened, that it might have a greater hold on commercial emulation.

This influenced the policy of Europe, inasmuch as it obliged England to carry on the war. From that moment the war assumed a serious character in England; it threatened the fortune of the public, that is to say, its very existence. It became popular. The English ceased to commit their defence to foreign auxiliaries; they took it upon themselves, and appeared on the Continent in large bodies. The struggle had never been perilous till then. I

foresaw it when I signed the decree. I suspected that all repose was at an end for me, and that my life would be spent in wrestling with obstacles which the public had lost sight of, but of which I possessed the secret, because I am the only man whom appearances never deceived. In my heart I flattered myself that I should be master of the future, by means of the army I had formed, so invincible did success seem to have made it. It never doubted of victory; it was easily moved, because we had exploded the system of camps and magazines. It could be transported in any direction at a moment's warning; and wherever it arrived it felt a conscious superiority. With such soldiers, where is the general who would not have loved glory? I loved it, I own; and yet, since the battle of Jena I had never felt that plenitude of confidence,

that contempt of consequences, to which I owed my first successes. I distrusted myself; that distrust made me uncertain in my decisions; my temper was ruffled, my character lowered. I did command myself, but what is not natural, is never perfect.

The continental system had determined the English to war with us even to the death. The North was subdued and overawed by my garrisons. The English had no connexion with it but in smuggling; but Portugal had been given up to them; and I knew that Spain, under the mask of neutrality, favoured her commerce.

But that the continental system should be of real use, it required to be complete. I had nearly accomplished it in the north; it was of consequence to cause it to be re-

spected in the south. I demanded a passage through Spain for a division of troops I wished to send into Portugal. It was granted. At the approach of my troops the court of Lisbon embarked for the Brazils, and left me its kingdom. I required a military road through Spain to communicate with Portugal. This road connected us with Spain. Till then I had never thought of that country, on account of its inefficiency.

The political state of Spain was at that time alarming; it was governed by the most incapable of sovereigns: a brave and worthy man, whose energies went no farther than to secure implicit obedience to the favourite. The favourite, without character and without talents, had neither pursuit nor energy, but what were em-

ployed in incessant demands for titles and riches.

The favourite was devoted to me, because he found it convenient to govern under the shadow of my alliance. But he had conducted affairs so ill, that his credit had sunk in Spain. He could no longer command obedience. His devotion to me became useless.

Public opinion in Spain had been proceeding in a line contrary to that of the rest of Europe. The people, who every where else had risen to the level of the revolution, had remained here far beneath it; enlightened notions had not even penetrated to the second class. They had rested on the surface; that is, they were confined to the highest classes.—These felt the degradation of their coun-

try, and blushed to obey a government which was debasing their native land. They were called the Liberales.

Thus the revolutionists in Spain were those who might lose by a revolution; and those who had all to gain would not hear of it. The same incongruity operated at Naples. It made me commit many errors, because I was not then possessed of the key to the mystery.

The presence of my troops in Spain excited strong sensations. Every body set about interpreting it. People were occupied by it. Some fermentation appeared. I soon learned it. The Liberales were sensible of the humiliation of their country; they thought to prevent its ruin by a conspiracy: the conspiracy succeeded.

It went no further than forcing the old king to abdicate, and punishing his favourite. Spain was no gainer by the exchange, for the son they placed on the throne was no better than the father. I am well informed at least on that head.

The conspiracy had scarcely succeeded, when the conspirators took fright at their own daring. They were afraid of themselves—of me—of every body. The monks disapproved of the violence committed against their old king, because it was illegitimate. I disapproved of it no less, but for a different reason. Fear took possession of the new court; the spirit of revolt seized the people, and anarchy the state.

The natural course of things had thus brought about a change in Spain; a revolution in fact was begun. It could not be of

the same nature as that in France, because it was composed of different elements. But till then it had no direction, because it had neither chief nor partisans beforehand. It was as yet only a suspension of authority; a subversion of power; in short, disorder.

There was nothing to be predicted concerning Spain; but that with so ignorant and ferocious a people a revolution could not be accomplished without torrents of blood and a long series of calamity.

But what was the end proposed by those who wished for a change in Spain? It was not a revolution like ours: it was an efficient government: a rational authority which might remove the rust which obscured their country, and restore it to

consideration abroad, and civilization at home.

I was able to give them both, by making myself master of their revolution at the point to which they had brought it. The object was to give Spain a dynasty, which should be strong because it was new, and enlightened because it should bring with it no prejudices. Mine combined these qualities. I therefore resolved to bestow this crown also upon it.

The most difficult step towards this end was taken—that of getting rid of the old dynasty. But the Spaniards had allowed their old king to be forced to abdicate the crown, and they would not acknowledge the new one. Every thing therefore seemed to promise, that in order to avoid anarchy, Spain would be glad to accept a sove-

reign armed with a prodigious power. By that means it would have easily stept into the rays of the imperial circle; and however deplorable the social state of Spain might be, it was a conquest not to be neglected.

In order to form a just idea of things, one should see them one's self; I therefore set out for Bayonne, to which place I had invited the old Spanish court. As it had nothing better to do, it came. I had also invited the new court. I really did not expect it to arrive, because it had something much better to do.

I had calculated, that to prevent Ferdinand from meeting either his father or me, they would have led him to revolt, or engaged him to go to America. He did neither, but came to Bayonne with his

tutor and courtiers, leaving Spain to the first comer.

This single step gave me the measure of the court. I had scarce spoken to the heads of the conspiracy, when I perceived their total ignorance of their real situation. They were prepared for nothing, therefore, saw nothing; their policy seemed like the blind leading the blind.* I had scarcely seen the king they had set upon the throne before I was satisfied that Spain ought not to be left in such hands.

I then resolved to accept the abdication of this family, and to place one of my brothers on the throne, now abandoned by

* Ils menaient leur politique comme des *quinze vingt* i. e. the inhabitants of the asylum for the blind so named.

its old possessors; they descended from it so easily, that I thought he might mount it with as little difficulty.

In fact, nothing seemed to oppose it; the Junta of Bayonne had acknowledged him; no legal power remained in Spain to refuse the change; the old king seemed grateful to me for taking the throne from his son, and had retired quietly to repose himself at Compiegne. His son was conducted to the castle of Valencay, where all necessary preparations had been made for his reception.

The Spaniards knew exactly what they had parted with in their old king; he left behind him neither regret nor remembrance; but the son was yet young; his reign had been hoped for. He was unfortunate; they converted him into a hero:

imagination exerted itself in his favour. The Liberales clamoured for national independence; the monks talked of legitimacy: the whole nation armed itself under these two pretexts.

I confess I was wrong to shut up the young king at Valencay. I ought to have allowed him to show himself, in order to undeceive those who took an interest in him.

I was especially in the wrong not to let him stay upon the throne. Things would have grown worse and worse in Spain. I should have acquired the title of protector of the old king, by giving him an asylum. The new government could not have failed to commit itself with England. I should have declared war both on my own account, and as plenioptentiary for the old

king. Spain would have trusted her army to fight her battles, and as soon as I had beaten it, the nation must have submitted to the right of conquest. It would not even have dreamed of murmuring, because in disposing of a conquered country one only follows established customs.

If I had been more patient I should have followed this plan; but I thought that the result being the same, the Spaniards would accept beforehand a change of dynasty which the state of affairs renderd inevitable. I managed this affair awkwardly, because I passed over the regular gradations. I had displaced the ancient race of kings in a way offensive to the Spaniards. Their wounded pride would not acknowledge the race I had put in its stead. The result was, that there was no authority any where, or rather, it was every

where. The whole nation fancied itself called upon to defend the state, since there was neither army nor authority to which that defence could be committed. Each man took the responsibility on himself: I had created anarchy, and found all the resources it can furnish turned against me. The whole nation fell upon me.

The Spanish nation, whose history records nothing but acts of avarice and ferocity, was not formidable face to face with an enemy. Its people fled at the very sight of our soldiers, but they stabbed them in the dark. They were exasperated, and used reprisals. One reprisal caused a second, and the war became a tissue of atrocity.

I felt that it gave a character of violence to my reign. That it was an example

dangerous to the people, and fatal to the army; because it consumed the men and fatigued the soldiers.

I erred in the commencement; but when once this war was fairly entered upon, it was impossible to abandon it: for the very smallest reverse gave spirit to my enemies, and all Europe instantly got under arms. I was obliged to be always victorious.

I went to Spain in order to accelerate events, and to examine the ground on which I had to leave my brother. I had taken possession of Madrid, and destroyed the English army which was advancing to its relief. My success was rapid: terror was at its height; resistance seemed about to cease; there was not an instant to lose; nor was any time lost. The English ministry armed Austria. They were always

as active in raising enemies, as I could be in overcoming them.

This time the intrigues of Austria were skilfully conducted; they took me by surprise. I must give praise where it is due.

My troops were scattered at Naples, at Madrid, at Hamburg. I myself was in Spain. It was probable that the Austrians might have been successful in the first instance. This success might have led to more, for in these cases the difficulty is usually in the first step. They might have tempted Prussia and Russia, re-animated the courage of the Spaniards, and restored popularity to the English ministry.

The court of Vienna maintains a tenacious policy, that is never disconcerted by passing events. It was long before I dis-

covered the reason. I perceived, a little too late, indeed, that this policy was so deeply rooted, only because the good nature of the government had allowed the state to degenerate into an oligarchy. The country is led by about a hundred noblemen: they possess the soil, and have seized upon the exchequer, the cabinet, and the army, by which means they are the real rulers, and have left to the court no more than the honour of the signature.

Oligarchies never change their opinions, because their interest is always the same. They do every thing ill; but they always continue doing, because they never die. They never succeed; but they support reverses admirably, because they support them in concert.

Austria has owed her safety four times

to this form of government: it decided for the war she had just declared against me.

I had not a moment to lose. I left Spain abruptly, and flew to the Rhine. I collected the troops nearest at hand: Prince Eugene had allowed himself to be beaten in Italy: I sent him some reinforcements. The kings of Suabia and Bavaria lent me their troops; with them I beat the Austrians at Ratisbon, and marched towards Vienna.

I advanced by forced marches along the right bank of the Danube; I depended on the viceroy to secure our junction. I intended to reach Vienna before the Austrians, to cross the Danube there, and to take up a position to receive the archduke.

This plan was well conceived; but it was imprudent, because I had to cope with a man of talents, and becauses I had not enough troops. But fortune was then on my side.

In return, the archduke made a very able movement: he divined my object, and threw himself rapidly upon Vienna, by the left bank of the Danube, and took up his position at the same time I did. As far as I know, this is the only able movement the Austrians ever made.

My plan had failed. I was in presence of a formidable army: it commanded my position, and forced me to remain inactive. Nothing now but a great battle could put an end to the war. It was my business to attack; the archduke had

given me that part to play: it was not easy, for he was in a position to receive me.

By an unexpected piece of good fortune, the archduke John, who should, at all hazards, have kept back the viceroy, allowed himself to be beaten. The army of Italy drove him from the other side of the Danube, and we held possession of the right.

But as we did not wish to remain there, we resolved to come to action. I caused pontoons to be thrown across the river. The army began to move. Marshal Massena's division was the first that crossed; he began his fire, when an accident carried away the pontoons. It was impossible to replace them in time to sustain him: he was attacked by the whole hostile army. This division maintained its ground

with heroic valour, for its situation was hopeless. Their ammunition had failed: they were on the point of destruction—when the Austrians ceased firing, thinking that sufficient to the day was the evil thereof. They retired to their former position at a decisive moment, and delivered me from the most cruel anxiety.

Nevertheless, we experienced a reverse; I perceived it by the state of public opinion. My defeat was published; my retreat was announced; the details of it were given, and my ruin was foretold. The Tyrolese had revolted: we had been obliged to send the Bavarian army to that country. Parties had taken up arms in Prussia and Westphalia, and spread themselves over the country, in order to excite revolt. The English undertook an expedition against Antwerp, which might have

succeeded, but for their own misconduct. My situation grew daily worse.

At length I succeeded in throwing fresh bridges over the Danube. The army crossed the river during a dreadful night. I was present at the crossing, for I was uneasy about it. It answered completely; our columns had time to form, and that great day arose with happy omens.

The battle was grand; for it was well disputed. But the generals did not make any great efforts of genius, because they commanded large masses upon a flat plain. It was long doubtful. The intrepidity of our troops, and a bold manœuvre of Macdonald, decided the fortune of the day.

Once broken, the Austrian army, defiled in disorder, by a long plain, on which

it lost a great many men. I pursued them vigorously, because I wished to decide the campaign. Beaten in Moravia, there was no resource but to sue for peace. I granted it for the fourth time.

I trusted that it would be lasting, because people get tired of being beaten, as they do of every thing else; and because there was a considerable party in Vienna who were in favour of a final alliance with the empire.

I wished for peace, because I felt the expediency of giving some respite to the people; for, instead of receiving advantages from the revolution, they had as yet seen only its horrors. We were no longer protectors, as at the beginning of the war; and in order to accustom the public opinion of Europe to the nature of my power,

it was not politic to show it always under a hostile aspect.

The enemy's party assured the populace that they were only arming to deliver them from the evils of war, and to lower the price of English goods.

These insinuations made proselytes. The war diminished the popularity of the revolution. Therefore, I desired peace; but it was necessary to obtain the consent of the English ministry: Austria undertook to ask it. They refused.

This refusal gave me great anxiety. England must have felt within herself resources which I could not comprehend. I endeavoured to discover what these were—but in vain.

Instead of laying down my arms, I was obliged to keep up my war establishment, and to weary all Europe. I was so much the more annoyed at it, as the allies had all the honour of the war, though I had the success. For they had the innocent air of defending those things that are called legitimate, because they are old. I, on the other hand, appeared the aggressor, because I fought to destroy these, and to set up what was new. The whole weight of the accusation lay on me.

Yet the war of the revolution was but the result of the situation of Europe. It was the crisis which changed its manners. It was the inevitable consequence of the transit from one social system to another. If I had been the inventor of the system, I should have been guilty of the evils it brought about. But it was invented by

nobody. It was produced by the current of the times. This current had silently made way for the Revolution, as it had done for the Reformation, and the evils that followed upon it. War depended no more upon me than upon the allies. It depended on the nature which the Almighty has impressed upon human beings.

England continued the war without auxiliaries, but not without allies, for every enemy to revolution was such. We had an open field to fight on in Spain. I sent back my troops there, but I did not go back myself. I was wrong: because nobody does one's business so well as one's self. But I was tired of all this commotion; and I, from that time, began to meditate a project that might give a new character to my reign.

But before I could accomplish this, the enemy embarrassed me in a quarter from which I had no apprehension. The north was occupied by my troops. The English were not strong enough to attack me in that point. It was in the Mediterranean that their navy ensured them superiority. They possessed Malta, and commanded Sicily, the shores of Spain, Africa, and Greece. They sought to profit by all these advantages.

They endeavored to excite a re-action in Italy, and convert it, if possible, into a second Spain. There were discontented persons everywhere, for I had not been able to give every body their ancient rights, combined with the advantages of the new system. There were such in Italy as well as elsewhere. The clergy had no affection for me, because my reign had

put an end to theirs. The devotees followed their example, and detested me. The rabble partook of the same feelings, because the clergy are still possessed of influence in Italy. The head-quarters of this opposition was Rome, as it was the only town in Italy where it could hope to escape my observation. Thence it held communications with the English; it instigated to revolt; it insulted me in anonymous pamphlets; it promulgated false reports. It procured recruits for England; it kept in pay the banditti of Cardinal Ruffa, for the purpose of assassinating Frenchmen; it attempted to blow up the palace of the minister of police at Naples. It was manifest that the English had a view upon Italy, and that they fomented these disturbances.

I could not permit this; I could not suf-

fer the French to be insulted and murdered. I contented myself, however, with making complaints at various times to the Holy See. I received civil answers to beg I would take the thing patiently. As my temper was never very patient, I saw that there was a decided hostility against us, and that I must outstrip it to prevent its exploding. I occupied Rome with my troops.

Instead of allaying the effervescence, this measure, which was perhaps a little violent, irritated the public. It however secured the tranquillity of Italy, and quashed the schemes of Lord W. Bentinck. But, in secret, the whole class of devotees did every thing that hatred and the spirit of the church could inspire against me.

This centre of conspiracy had ramifica-

tions in France and Switzerland. The clergy, the malcontents, the partisans of the old order of things, (for there were still such,) had united to intrigue against my authority, and to do me every possible injury. They no longer appeared as conspirators; they had borrowed the standard of the church, and they used its thunders instead of cannon. It was their watch-word and their war-cry. It was a sort of orthodox free-masonry, which I could not lay hold on at any given point, because it pervaded all places.

Besides, it was difficult to attack these people in detail, because it would have been a persecution; but that is the business of the weak, not of the strong. I thought I could disperse the party by an alarming display of power. I determined to show my resolution, and teach them

that I chose to maintain order and authority, and that I scrupled at nothing to accomplish my purpose.

I knew that nothing could be so severe a blow upon the party as to separate it from the head of the church. I hesitated long before I adopted this resolution, because it was repugnant to me; but the longer I delayed it, the more necessary it became to decide. I considered that Charles V. who was more religious, and less powerful than myself, had dared to make a Pope prisoner. He was no worse for it, and I thought I might at least attempt as much. The Pope was carried off from Rome, and conveyed to Savona. Rome was annexed to France.

This stroke of policy sufficed to confound the schemes of the enemy. Italy

remained quiet and obedient to the last moment of the empire. But the war of the church was pursued with equal inveteracy. The zeal of the devotees was rekindled. It became a secret but venomous spirit against me. In spite of all my precautions I could not prevent their communicating with Savona, and receiving instructions. The monks of La Trappe, of Fribourg, conducted this correspondence; it was printed in their house, and circulated from priest to priest throughout the empire. It became necessary to remove the Holy Father to Fontainbleau, and to expel the monks of La Trappe, in order to put a stop to these communications. After all, I believe I did not succeed.

This petty war had a bad effect, because I could not prevent it from wearing the appearance of a persecution. I had been

obliged to proceed with severity against unarmed persons, and, in spite of myself, to make victims of them. These unhappy disputes with the church forced upon me five hundred state prisoners; political occasions never made fifty. I was in the wrong throughout this affair; I was strong enough to have left the feeble at liberty, and I occasioned a great deal of evil by attempting to prevent it.

A great project occupied the state. It appeared to me to be of a nature to consolidate my empire by placing me in a new situation with regard to Europe. I expected important results from it.

My power was no longer contested; it only wanted the character of perpetuity, which it could not have as long as I had no heir. Without an heir my death would

have been a moment of danger to my dynasty; for authority must have no period fixed before hand, if it is not to be contested.

I perceived the necessity of separating myself from a wife by whom I could no longer hope for posterity. I hesitated on account of the misery of quitting the person whom I best loved; it was long before I could resolve upon it. But she resigned herself to it, with that devotedness of affection which she always displayed towards me. I accepted the sacrifice, because it was indispensable. The simplest policy pointed out to me an alliance with the house of Austria. The court of Vienna was tired of reverses. By uniting herself irrevocably with me, she placed her safety in my custody. By this alliance she became a partner in my greatness, and

from that moment it was as much my interest to support her as it had before been to subdue her. By this alliance we produced the most formidable mass of power that had ever existed; we surpassed the Roman empire. The alliance was formed.

On the continent there was nothing without our pale, but Russia, and the wreck of Prussia: the rest was at our disposal. So vast a preponderance ought to have discouraged our enemies; and without vanity I might now have considered my work as accomplished, and that I had placed my throne beyond the reach of accident.

My calculations were just: but passion never calculates. Appearances, however, were in my favour. The continent was

tranquil, and accustomed itself to my reign; it at least appeared so by the homage paid me. It was so respectful, that a more discerning person than myself might have been deceived by it. The respect in which the blood of the house of Austria was held, rendered my reign legitimate in the eyes of the sovereigns of Europe; and I believed that the throne would not be refused to the son which the Empress had just borne me.

There were no disturbances any where but in Spain, where the English were in great force. But that war gave me no uneasiness, because I was resolved to be even more obstinate than the Spaniards; and with time any thing may be accomplished.

The empire was strong enough to carry

on the Spanish war without inconvenience. It neither put a stop to the decorations with which I was embellishing France, nor to the useful undertakings which we were pursuing. The administration of justice was improving. I was organizing institutions which might ensure the strength of the empire, by educating a generation for the purposes of its support.

The continental system was the only source of dispute with such governments as had coasts adapted for smuggling. Among these Russia was in a delicate situation: its civilization was not sufficient to enable it to do without English goods. I had nevertheless insisted on their being probibited; it was an absurdity, but it was necessary to complete the system of exclusion. A contraband trade commenced; I foresaw it, because the Russian govern-

ment does not watch well. But as shut doors are always more difficult to pass through than open ones, smuggling never introduces so many goods as a free trade. I thus obtained two-thirds of my object; however, I did not complain the less: they attempted to justify themselves, and then began anew—we became angry; such a state of things could not last.

In fact, since our alliance with Austria, a trial of strength with Russia had become inevitable. Russia could not but perceive that our political union could have no enemy but herself, for we were masters of all the rest of Europe. She must therefore content herself with a complaisant non-entity, or attempt to make head against us and maintain her rank. She was too strong to consent to be nothing; but she was too feeble to resist us; in this

alternative it was better to assume an attitude of defiance than to acknowledge herself conquered beforehand. This latter part is always the worst to take: Russia decided for the former.

I began to feel suddenly that there was some haughtiness in the transactions with Petersburg. They refused to seize contraband goods: they complained that I had occupied the territory of Oldenburgh. I replied in the same tone. It was clear that we were about to quarrel, for neither of us were patient, and our force was nearly equal.

I was very confident as to the issue of the war; because I had conceived a plan by which I hoped to put an end for ever to the long struggle in which I had been engaged. Besides, I thought that at the point

to which we had now attained, the sovereigns of Europe had no direct interest in the conflict, for our interests had been identified; the policy of the princes should now have been in my favour, for it was no longer my office to shake thrones, but to strengthen them. I had added new strength to royalty, and in that I had wrought for them. They were sure of reigning while in alliance with me, equally sheltered from war and from revolution.

This policy was so palpable, that I thought the sovereigns clear-sighted enough to perceive it. I never distrusted them. Who in fact would have guessed that, seduced by their hatred against me, they would have abandoned the cause of the throne, and themselves have brought back a revolution among their people, to which they will sooner or later fall a sacrifice?

I had calculated that Russia was too large a body to make part of the European system which I had recast, and of which France was the centre. I therefore determined to exclude her from Europe, that she might not disturb the unity of my system. The new political line of demarcation required to be strong enough to resist the whole weight of Russia. That country was to be forced back within the limits she had occupied a hundred years ago.

Nothing but the immense mass of my empire could have been vigorous enough to attempt such an act of political violence. But I believed it possible, and that it was the only means of securing the world from the Cossacks.

To succeed in this plan it was necessary

to re-organize Poland on a sound basis, and to beat the Russians in order to force them to accept the new frontier that was to be traced with the point of the sword. Russia might without disgrace have accepted the peace which was to fix these frontiers, because there was nothing offensive to her in the arrangement. It was an avowal of her strength and of our fear.

Thus placed by my precautions without the European pale—separated from our commonwealth by 300,000 guardians, Russia might have united with England. She would have preserved her political independence and her national existence in all their integrity; because she would have been as much out of our way as the kingdom of Thibet.

This was the only rational plan. Sooner or later its ruin will be regretted: for Europe, arranged by mutual consent in a uniform system, re-cast on the model required by the spirit of the age, would have offered the grandest spectacle that history had ever presented. But too many interested prejudices blinded the eyes of its sovereigns to allow them to perceive the danger where it really existed. They fancied they saw it where the only safeguard could arise.

I set out for Dresden. This war was to decide irrevocably on the question which had been debated for twenty years; it was to be the last: for beyond Russia the world ends. Our enemies had but a moment: they therefore made a last effort. The court of Austria began with deranging my plans on Poland, by refusing to give

up her share of it. I fancied myself obliged to keep up appearances with regard to her, and that instance of weakness ruined my scheme: for from the moment I yielded that point it was impossible to set openly about the independence of Poland. I was obliged to portion out the country on which the safety of Europe was to depend. By this weakness I spread distrust and discontent among the Poles. They saw that I sacrificed them to my own convenience. I saw my error, and was ashamed of it. I refrained from going to Warsaw, because I had then nothing to do there: I had nothing now to depend on for the future fate of the Polish nation but the victories I might obtain.

I knew that boldness often ensures success. I thought it might be possible to do in one campaign what I had intended

to have done in two. This haste pleased me—for my temper had become anxious and impatient. I was at the head of an army which knew no feeling but that of glory—no home but a field of battle. Instead of making sure of my ground, and advancing by gradual, but certain steps, I traversed Poland, and crossed the Niemen. I beat the armies that opposed me; I marched on without a halt, and I entered Moscow.

It was the last day of my good fortune. It should have been the last of my life.

Master of a capital that the Russians had left me in ashes: I might have hoped that they would acknowledge themselves beaten, and accept the advantageous terms of peace I offered. But, at that moment, fortune abandoned our cause. England

brought about a peace between Russia and the Sublime Porte, which gave Russia the disposal of her whole force. A Frenchman whom chance had raised to the throne of Sweden, betrayed the interests of his country, and allied himself with its enemies in hopes of bartering Finland for Norway.

He himself traced out the Russian plan of defence: and England prevented the court of Petersburg from accepting peace. I was astonished at the delay of its conclusion. The season was advancing. It became evident that there was no intention of peace. The moment I was sure of this I gave orders for a retreat. The elements rendered it severe. The French acquired honour by the firmness with which they supported their reverses. Their courage never left them but with their life.

Shocked, myself, at the sight of this disaster, I was obliged to recollect that a sovereign ought never either to bend or weep.

Europe was still more astonished at my misfortunes than it had been at my success. But I was not to be deceived by its apparent stupor. I had lost the half of that army which had overawed it. It might hope to overcome the remainder, for the proportions of our forces were altered. I foresaw, therefore, that the moment the first surprise was over, I should again find the eternal coalition in arms; its shouts of joy had already reached me.

The moment of defeat is an unfavourable one for the conclusion of peace. Austria—who was comforted for my humiliation, because by it her share of our al-

liance became more important—Austria proposed peace. She offered her mediation: it was refused: she had lost her credit.

I must, therefore, again be victorious: I felt sure of being so when I perceived that the public feeling of France went along with me. Never did history present a great people in a fairer light: afflicted at their losses, but eager to repair them. In three months it was done. This single fact is a sufficient answer to the clamours of such as feel no triumph but in the disasters of their country.

France, perhaps, owes to me, in part, the proud station she maintained in her hour of misfortune; and if, in my whole career, there is a time which deserves the esteem of posterity, it is that—for it was most painful to bear.

I appeared, then, at the opening of the campaign as formidable as ever. The enemy was surprised at the sudden reappearance of my eagles: the army I commanded was more warlike than accustomed to war; but it was heir of a long series of glory, and I led it up to the enemy with confidence. I had a great task to perform; to re-establish our military credit, and to renew the struggle which had been so near its conclusion. I still possessed Italy, Holland, and most of the states of Germany, I had lost but little ground; but England redoubled her efforts. Prussia waged an insurgent war against us. The princes of the confederation were ready to join the strongest, and as I still continued so, they followed my standard, though languidly. Austria attempted to maintain a neutral dignity, while Germany was overrun with fire-

brands, who spirited up the people against us. My whole system tottered.

The fate of the world depended on chance; for there was no plan. A battle would decide it. Russia was to fight this battle, because she was strong and in earnest.

I attacked the Prusso-Russian army, and I beat it three times.

As my success deranged the plans of the favourites of England, they affected to abandon all hostile intentions, and commissioned Austria to propose peace.

The conditions were, in appearance, supportable, and many others in my place would have accepted them. For they only demanded the restitution of the Illy-

sian provinces and the Hanse towns: the nomination of independent sovereigns in Italy and Holland; the evacuation of Spain, and the restoration of the Pope to Rome. They were to have treated for the renunciation of the confederation of the Rhine and the mediation of Switzerland; but they were permitted to yield these two articles.

I must have been greatly lowered in public opinion, since they dared, after three victories, to ask me to give up countries that they had not yet even ventured to threaten.

If I had consented to this peace, the fall of the empire would have been more sudden than its rise. By the map, indeed, it would still have been great; but, in fact, it would have been nothing. Austria, by

taking upon herself the office of mediatrix, broke through our alliance, and united herself to the enemy. By restoring the Hanse towns I should have shown that I could give back my possessions, and every body would have been for similar restitutions; I should have caused insurrections in every country. By evacuating Spain, I should have encouraged every species of resistance. By resigning the iron crown, I should have compromised that of the empire. The chances of peace were all against me; those of war might save me.

I confess that too great successes, and too great reverses, had marked the course of my history, to make it possible for me to put off the decision to another day. The great Revolution of the 19th century must either be accomplished irrevocably,

or be buried under a mountain of the dead. The whole world was present to decide the question. Had I signed peace at Dresden, I should have left it undecided, and it must have come forward a little later. I must have recommenced the long career of success that I had already gone through; I must have recommenced it, although my youth was gone. My empire, to which I had promised rest, was wearied of the war, and ready to blame me for not accepting peace.

It was better, however, to take advantage of this critical moment, when the fate of the world depended upon the issue of a single battle; for, had I been victorious, the world would again have been mine.

I refused peace. As every one prefers seeing with his own eyes, Austria saw no-

thing but my imprudence, and thought the moment favourable for going over to the enemy. I was not, however, certain of this defection, till the very last moment; but I was well able to sustain it. My plan for the campaign was fixed. Its result would have been decisive.

The worst of great armies is, that the general cannot be everywhere. My manœuvres were, I think, the very best I had ever combined; but general Vandamme quitted his post, and was taken. Eager to make himself a Marshal of the Empire, M'Donald nearly drowned himself in the land-floods: Marshal Ney let himself be quietly beaten:—My plan was overthrown in a very few hours.

I was beaten: I gave orders for a retreat; I was still strong enough to act

offensively, by changing my ground; I did not choose to lose the advantage of all the places I occupied; for, by a single victory, I should still have been master of the North, as far as Dantzick; I, therefore, reinforced all my garrisons, with orders to hold out to the last. They obeyed my orders.

I retired slowly, with an imposing force; but still I retired, and the enemy followed, increasing at every step; for nothing fills the ranks like success. All the hatred that time had treasured up burst forth at once. The Germans revolted to be revenged for the evils of war—the moment was propitious; I was beaten. As I foresaw, the enemy appeared to spring out of the earth. I awaited them at Leipzig, on those very plains where they had been beaten just before.

Our position was not good, because we were attacked in a semi-circle. Victory itself could be of little use to us. In fact, the first day we had the advantage, but were unable to renew the attack. It was a drawn battle, and we had to begin again. The army fought well, in spite of fatigue; but then, by an act which posterity will designate as it pleases, the allies, who were in our ranks, turned suddenly against us, and we were conquered.

We fell back upon France; but so great a retreat could not be conducted without disorder: exhaustion and hunger destroyed many of our men. The Bavarians, after having deserted from our standard, attempted to prevent our return into France. The French marched over their dead bodies, and gained Mayence. This retreat cost us as many men as that from Russia.

Our losses were so tremendous, that I myself was appalled. The nation was overwhelmed. If the enemy had pursued us, they would have entered Paris with our rear guard: but the sight of France dismayed them: they long looked at our frontiers before they dared to pass them.

The question was no longer glory, but the honour of the nation; I therefore relied on the French. But I was unfortunate; I was ill served. I do not accuse the people; they are always ready to shed their blood for their country. I accuse no one of treachery, for it is more difficult to betray than people believe. I only accuse that despondency which is the result of misfortune: I was not free from it myself. He who is discouraged is undecided, because he perceives before him only a choice of evils; and indecision is the worst of evils in matters of importance.

I ought to have distrusted this general degradation more, and to have looked to every thing myself. But I depended on a frightened ministry, which did every thing ill. The fortresses were neither repaired nor provided, for they had not been threatened for twenty years. The zeal of the peasants victualled them; but the greater part of the commandants were old invalids, who had been sent to them for repose. Most of my prefects were timid, and thought of packing up their goods instead of defending them. I ought to have changed them in time, that none but brave men might have appeared in my front ranks, if, indeed, such are to be found among those who have any thing to lose.

Nothing was as yet ready for our defence, when the Swiss gave up to the allies the passage across the Rhine. Notwith-

standing their victories, the enemy had not dared to advance boldly; they crept on with caution: they were alarmed at marching without resistance through a country they had conceived to be so thick set with bayonets. They did not meet our advanced guard till they reached Langres: then began that campaign which is too well known to need repetition; but which has left an immortal name to the handful of brave men who would not despair of the salvation of France. They restored me to confidence; and three times I believed that nothing was impossible with such soldiers.

I had still an army in Italy, and strong garrisons in the north; but I had no time to call them up: I must conquer on the spot. The fate of Europe hung on my person; there was not an important point but that on which I stood.

I accused General Marmont of having betrayed me: I now do him justice: no soldier betrayed the fidelity he owed his country; such wretches were found among a different class. But I was not master of myself, nor of my grief, when I saw the capitulation of Paris signed by my ancient brother in arms.

From the moment I was conquered, the cause of the revolution was lost. It was neither the royalists, nor the cowards, nor the malecontents, who had overthrown me. The allies were the masters of the world, since I was no longer able to dispute the title with them.

I was at Fontainbleau, surrounded by a small but faithful band. I might have tried the chance of battle with it still, for it was capable of heroic actions. But France

would have paid too dear for the pleasure of revenge. She would have justly had to accuse me of her sufferings. I wish her to have nothing to accuse me of but the glory to which I raised her name. I was resigned.

They proposed different acts of abdication to me; I felt this to be a mummery. I had abdicated on the day on which I was conquered. But the formula might one day be of use to my son. I did not hesitate about signing it.

A numerous party would have wished this child to be placed upon the throne, that the revolution might be maintained, together with my dynasty. But the thing was impossible. Even the allies had no choice. They were obliged to recall the Bourbons. Every one boasted of having

brought about their restoration: but it was forced. It was the immediate consequence of the principles for which they had been fighting for twenty years. By assuming the crown, I had placed the throne out of the reach of the mob. By restoring it to the Bourbons, they placed it out of the reach of a fortunate soldier. It was the only means of extinguishing for ever the revolutionary fire. The placing any other sovereign on the throne of France would have been a solemn recognition of the principles of the revolution; in other words, an act of madness on the part of the sovereigns.

I will say more: the return of the Bourbons was a blessing to France. It saved her from anarchy; and promised repose, because it ensured peace. It was necessary between the allies and the Bourbons,

because they guaranteed each other. France was not a party in that peace; because it was not made in her favour, but in favour of a family that it suited the allies to replace on the throne. It was a treaty intended to satisfy every body. Therefore it was the best manner in which France could have risen from the greatest defeat ever sustained by a warlike nation.

I was a prisoner, and expected to be treated as such; but either from that kind of respect inspired by an old warrior, or from the spirit of generosity which pervaded this revolution, they allowed me to choose an asylum. The allies granted me an island, and a title, which they regarded as equally vain. They permitted me (and in so doing their generosity was truly noble) to take with me a small number of

those old soldiers with whom I had passed through such various fortune. They permitted me to take a few of those men whom misfortune cannot discourage.

Separated from my wife and child, against every law divine and human, I retired to the Isle of Elba, without any kind of project for the future. I had become a mere spectator of the age. But I knew, better than any one, into what hands Europe was about to fall; and I therefore knew that it would be guided by chance; the turns of such a chance might bring me again into play. But the want of power to contribute towards it prevented me from forming any plans, and I lived a stranger to the world. But the tide of events rolled on more rapidly than I had expected, and it came upon me in my retreat.

I received the daily papers; I learned from them the external state of affairs. I tried to seize their spirit, through the mist of false representations.

It was evident to me that the king had discovered the secret of the age. He had discovered that France had chosen the revolution. He had discovered, by five-and-twenty years' experience, that his party was too weak to resist the majority. He knew that the majority will always give laws. He must therefore reign with the majority, that is, by and with the revolution. But that he might not become a revolutionist himself, the king was obliged to re-model the revolution by virtue of the divine right which he inherited.

The idea was ingenious; it made the Bourbons revolutionists with a safe con-

science, and made the revolutionists royalists by supporting their interests and opinions. There was to be but one heart and one soul in the nation. This was what every one repeated, but it was nevertheless untrue.

There was, however, so much felicity in this combination, that France, under this system, would have been flourishing in a few years. The king, by a single stroke of the pen, might have solved the problem for which I had been fighting for twenty years; since he might have established the new political economy of France, to which all Europe would have assented. In order to succeed, the only requisite art was that of knowing how to be master.

To bring about this great work, the king

had granted a charter, cast in the mould of all other charters. It was excellent—they are all excellent when they are put in practice. But as charters are only skins of parchment, they are of no value but by the authority which takes their execution upon itself. Now, this authority resided nowhere: instead of concentrating it in the only responsible hands, the king allowed it to be frittered away among the party which was called by his name. Instead of being the sole head of the state, he allowed himself to be made the head of a party; every thing in France assumed a factious appearance. Anarchy appeared.

From that moment there was nothing but inconsistency and contradiction in the court. Words never agreed with things, because the courtiers in their hearts wished for things different from those which existed.

The king had granted the charter that it might not be forced from him; but it was evident that the royalists hoped to unravel it thread by thread, because in truth it did not suit them.

They had only therefore erected temporary piers for the arch of government; they had re-modelled the nobility, but they had given it neither privilege nor power. It was not democratic, for it was exclusive; it was not aristocratic, for it was a cypher in the state: it was, therefore, an injury to the nobility to have re-established it on such a footing; for they had set it up to be attacked, because it was offensive, without giving it the means of defence. This was an absurdity which could not but lead to continual strife.

They attempted to re-model the clergy.—

but they chose an apostate bishop to re-establish the throne and the altar. They attempted to expunge the memory of the revolution—but they dug up its dead bodies.

They tried to make the revolution of '89 acceptable to the royalists, and the counter-revolution of the 31st of March to the ex-conventionalists. Both attempts were ineffectual; for revolutions will suit none but those who have gone along with their spirit, and were born in it. The king should have had no man older than twenty about him.

They attempted to maintain the revolution, while they debased its institutions. Therefore, they disheartened the bulk of the nation, which had grown up with them, and was accustomed to respect them.

They retained my soldiers, because they were afraid of them; and they had them reviewed by men who talked of glory while they bowed to the Cossacks.

There was no confidence in the existing state of things, because there was no visible centre of action. There was none in public interest, for it was compromised; nor in opinion, for it was crushed; nor in power, because there seemed to be neither head nor hands at the summit of affairs.

I was tolerably well informed of all that passed at Vienna: at that congress where they were amusing themselves with apeing me. I learned, in good time, that the ministers of France had persuaded the congress to take me off the Isle of Elba, and to exile me to St. Helena. I had some

difficulty in believing that the Emperor of Russia would consent to such a violation of the faith of treaties; for I always esteemed his character highly; but, at length, I became satisfied that it was so, and I set about measures for avoiding the destiny they were preparing for me.

My feeble means of defence would soon have been exhausted; I had, therefore, to endeavour to create such as might make me, a second time, formidable to my enemies.

France had no confidence in her government. The government had as little in France. The nation had found that her interests were not those of the crown, and that those of the crown were not hers. It was mutual treachery, which could not fail to ruin one or other of the parties. It

was time to prevent it; and I conceived a plan, which will appear bold in history; but which, in fact, was reasonable.

I aspired to re-ascend the throne of France. However weak my resources, they were superior to those of the royalists; for the honour of the country was my ally, a feeling which never dies in the heart of a Frenchman.

I relied on that support. I reviewed the diminutive force, which I destined for so great an enterprise. The soldiers were ill clothed, for I had not wherewithal to equip them anew, but their hearts were firm.

My preparations were soon completed, for I carried nothing but arms. I relied on the French for furnishing us with every thing.

The English officer, who was stationed near me, was amusing himself at Leghorn, and I set sail with a favourable wind.

Our little flotilla met with no accident; our passage lasted five days. I came in sight of the coast of France at nearly the same spot on which I had landed fifteen years before, on my return from Egypt. Fortune seemed to smile as she did then: I returned, as before, to that land of glory, to raise her fallen eagles, and to restore her independence.

I landed without an obstacle. I found myself once more in France. I returned in misfortune. My train consisted of a small number of friends and brothers in arms, who had partaken with me of good and ill fortune; but this was a claim on the respect and love of the French.

I had no settled plan, because I had only vague notions respecting the state of things. I intended to be governed by circumstances. I had only taken some resolutions for probable occurrences.

I had but one road to take, because I wanted a strong hold. Grenoble was the nearest fortress; I therefore marched towards Grenoble, as quickly as possible, because I wished to ascertain what I had to depend on. The reception I met with on my road surpassed my expectations, and confirmed my intentions. I saw that that portion of the people, which was not corrupted by passion or interest, retained a proud feeling, which was wounded by their humiliation.

I at length discovered the first troops that were sent against me. They were

my own soldiers—I advanced without fear, for I knew they would never dare to fire upon me. They saw their emperor marching at the head of their old masters in the art of war, who had so long showed them the way to victory. I was still the same, for I brought back independence along with my eagles.

Who could for a moment believe that French soldiers would hesitate between official oaths taken on the banners of a stranger, and the faith they had sworn to one who had come to free their country?

The people and the soldiers received me with the same shouts of joy. These shouts were my only escort, but they were better than any splendour, for they promised me the throne.

I expected to meet with some resistance from the royalists; but I was mistaken: they made none, and I entered Paris without even seeing any of them, except, perhaps, at the windows. There was never enterprise so rash, in appearance, which cost so little trouble in the execution: it was because it met the wishes of the nation, and that every thing is easy which goes along with public opinion.

This Revolution was effected in twenty days—without costing a single drop of blood. The aspect of France was changed. The royalists fled for help to the allies. The nation, left to itself, resumed its magnanimity. It was free: for, by placing me on the throne, it had exercised the greatest act of spontaneous power to which the people can claim a right. I could not have been there without its consent, for my six

hundred men could never have conquered it. I was no longer dreaded as a prince, but beloved as a saviour. The greatness of my enterprise had blotted out my misfortunes: it had restored the confidence of the French; I was once more the man of their choice.

Never did a whole nation throw itself with so much self-devotion and intrepidity into the most perilous situation: it calculated neither the danger nor the consequences. It was the love of independence that animated this people, to whom history will give the precedence over all others.

I had refused the treaty of Chatillon because I was upon the throne of France, and it would have made me stoop too low. But I might accept that granted to the Bourbons, because I had just come from

the Isle of Elba.—In mounting one may stop—never in descending.

I hoped that Europe, astonished at my return, and at the energy of the French people, would be afraid to renew the war with a nation so daring, and with a man whose single character was stronger in itself than all his armies.

This would have been the case had the congress been dispersed, and had we treated with the princes separately. But their pride took the alarm, because they were under the eyes of each other; and my attempts to maintain peace were unsuccessful.

I ought to have foreseen this result, and to have availed myself, without delay, of the first impulse of the people, to show to

what degree we were formidable. The enemy would have been dismayed at our boldness. He ascribed my hesitation to weakness. He was right; for I was no longer acting in character.

My pacific attitude lulled the nation to sleep, because I had allowed it to believe that peace was possible; from that moment my system of defence was overthrown, because the means of resistance were not adequate to the danger.

The only means of procuring revolutionary resources would have been to begin that great work anew; to stir up the passions in order to profit by their aberrations. Nothing less could have saved France.

I should have only had to regulate a second revolution as I had done the first;

but I never loved popular commotions, because there is no rein to guide them; and I deceived myself by imagining that we might defend Thermopylæ by loading each piece with a dozen cartridges.

I however set about a partial revolution, as if I had not been aware that half-measures are good for nothing! I offered the nation liberty, because it had complained of a want of it during my first reign. This liberty produced its usual effect; it put words in the place of actions. The imperialists were disgusted, because I shook the system to which they had attached themselves. The bulk of the nation shrugged their shoulders, for they cared very little about liberty. The republicans distrusted my proceeding, for it was not natural to me.

Thus did I myself cause disunion in the state. I perceived it, but I relied on the war for a remedy. France had risen again with so much magnanimity; she had shown such contempt for the future; her cause was so just, (for it was that of the most sacred rights of nations,) that I hoped the whole people would have armed themselves by a spontaneous movement of honour and indignation. But it was too late.

I felt the danger of my situation. I calculated the attack and the defence: they were not in proportion. I began to doubt of my means: but it was not the time to confess it. By an unfortunate chance, my health was deranged as the crisis approached. My body was in a state of suffering; my mind irresolute. The armies advanced. In mine, the soldiers were full

of devotion and enthusiasm; but the officers felt these emotions no longer. They were wearied; they were no longer young; they had grown gray in arms: they had estates and palaces. The king had allowed them to retain their fortunes and their places. They were now like adventurers risking them anew with me. They were beginning their career again; and, however well we may love life, no man would choose to live it over again: it is asking too much of human nature.

I set out for head-quarters, alone against the world. I tried to combat it. Victory was faithful to us the first day; but she deceived us the next. We were overcome, and the glory of our arms was extinguished on the same field where it was kindled twenty-three years before.

I might still have defended myself, for my soldiers would not have deserted me; but they waged war against me alone. They called upon the French to deliver me up: in me it would have been an act of cowardly meanness, to force them to fight. I was not worth so great a sacrifice. It was my part to give myself up. I had no choice. I determined to surrender myself. I hoped they would be content with the hostage I thus placed in their hands, and that they would put the crown upon my son's head.

I believe it would have been impossible to have placed him on the throne in 1814: but I think it might have been wise in 1815. I do not give my reasons—possibly the future may bring them to light.

I did not quit France till the enemy approached my retreat. As long as none

but Frenchmen were about me, I chose to remain among them, alone and unarmed. It was the last proof of confidence and affection I could show them. It was a testimony that I bore to their loyalty in the face of the world.

France respected misfortune in my person to the very moment in which I quitted her shores for ever. I might have retrieved my reverses in the new world; but after having reigned over France, I could not think of debasing her throne by seeking glory elsewhere.

A prisoner in another hemisphere, I have nothing now to defend but the reputation History is preparing for me. She must say, at least, that the man for whom a whole people devoted itself, could not be so destitute of worth as some of his contemporaries assert.